

JOURNAL OF EARLY
SOUTHERN DECORATIVE ARTS



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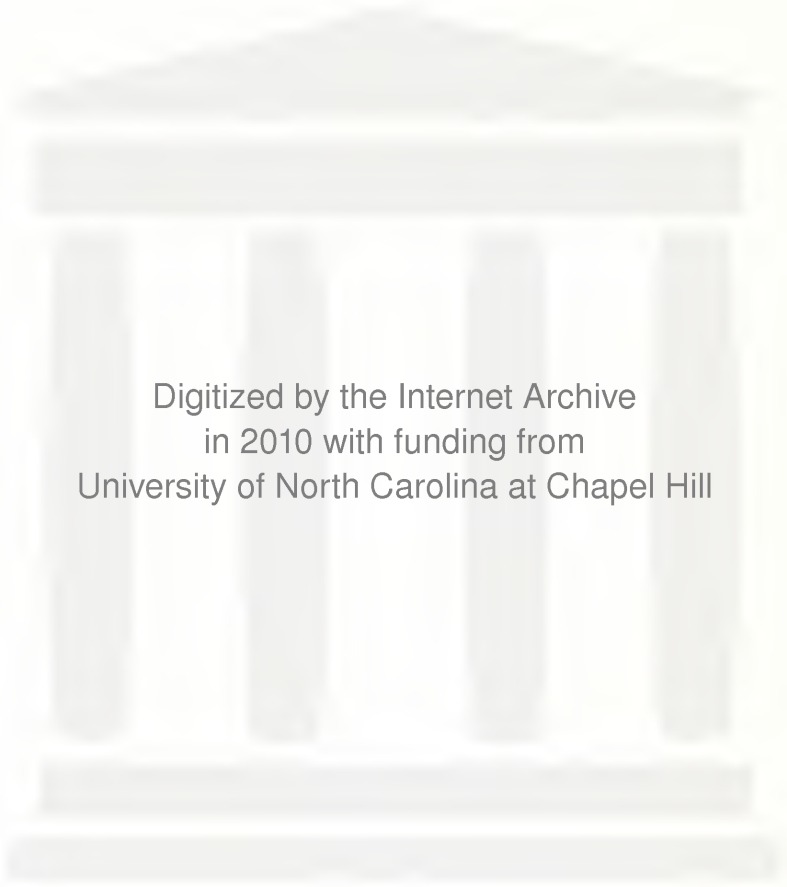
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Editorial Note

In 1975, when MESDA mailed the first issue of the *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts*, the museum had already established itself as a pioneer in both collecting and researching the decorative arts of the early American South. The museum's collection was unparalleled. Its field and documentary research programs were revealing new objects and craftsmen at a frenetic pace. MESDA's staff saw the need for a vehicle to tell the world about their new discoveries. The result was a scholarly journal that had an immediate and significant impact on the field. Thirty-eight years later, *JESDA* remains an often-cited resource and a valuable venue for emerging scholarship.

Everyday I am reminded that we are experiencing a historic transformation. The Internet has fundamentally altered the ways that we consume information. Facts are available instantaneously. Files can be sent to colleagues in the blink of an eye. More importantly, the number of scholars and students that rely on electronic resources has steadily increased and will only grow in the future. Bytes and pixels have supplanted typewriters and film. The world of scholarly publishing is evolving into something new and more powerful. We are pleased to announce that *JESDA* is evolving with it.

Discussions are currently underway between MESDA and the University of North Carolina's Digital Libraries and Archives to form a partnership that will fully digitize future articles of *JESDA*. The journal will be available to anyone free of charge, no subscription necessary. The images will be in color and the text keyword searchable. Plans

are being made to include a print-on-demand option for those of you who prefer to keep your journals bound and on a shelf. Also, all back issues of *JESDA* will be available digitally.

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of the developing MESDA-UNC partnership is the goal to digitize the resources in the MESDA Research Center to create an Internet portal through which scholars and students can access the Craftsman and Object databases from anywhere in the world. The full text of the craftsman cards and the object images and datasheets will be integrated into a keyword searchable resource, providing scholars, students, collectors, and historians with the tools to frame their research in innovative ways not possible with the existing index cards and photographs.

MESDA and Old Salem Museums & Gardens are excited to be at the forefront of the digital revolution in the field of southern material culture. As valued readers of *JESDA* we will keep you informed as the specifics about the online journal and the Internet portal are finalized. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy this final paper-and-ink issue—it too will soon be available digitally!

Gary Albert
Managing Editor

Fancy and Fine, Plain and Simple

Furniture in Columbia and Richland County, South Carolina, 1800–1860¹

JOHN SHERRER

IN 1800, COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA, was still a fledgling town, unlike the larger coastal cities of the eastern seaboard that had long been powerful centers of commerce and transportation. Founded just fourteen years earlier, in 1786, Columbia's establishment was an effort to stem the political disparity created as greater numbers of settlers moved into the state's backcountry. This youthful upstart enjoyed the dual distinction of being the state's new seat of government and its first planned city. Columbia's location overlooking the Congaree River reveals its founders' concern over balancing symbolism with geographic necessity (*Figures 1 and 2*). The resultant new city, situated along the state's fall line, naturally became a transition zone for people, goods, and cultures traveling from the Lowcountry to the Piedmont and vice versa.

During the course of the next thirty years, Columbia and the surrounding county of Richland grew steadily; although, as more than one historian has noted, this growth was "hardly spectacular."² That is not to say that the area was a "place of cultural chaos," which has been the stereotypical understanding of the early Backcountry.³ Many contemporary travel accounts indicate momentum towards greater physical development and cultural sophistication. Unfortunately, few accounts offer insight into the furnishings early Columbians would have used. Newspapers of the day feature relatively minimal advertise-



FIGURE 1. Map of the State of South Carolina engraved by Benjamin Tanner, 1796. MESDA Research File (hereafter MRF) S-14196R.

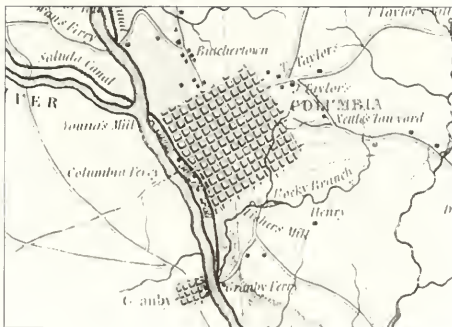


FIGURE 2. Richland District, *Mills Atlas*, 1825.

ments for cabinetmakers, suggesting either few could or would bear the expense for advertising or that there simply were very few such craftsmen operating in Columbia at that time. However, those who did post notices left modern audiences a tantalizing glimpse into these earlier artisans' legacies.

Interest in the stories behind these advertisements inspired a broader study of Columbia and Richland County cabinetmakers and the wares they manufactured and sold from 1800 until 1860. While this analysis remains in a nascent stage, thus far its findings indicate these men were making and importing furniture, as well as performing ancillary services for a variety of customers. It is hoped that this preliminary inquiry will promote further research that will result in a better understanding of Fall Line artisan activity and an under-investigated aspect of South Carolina material culture.⁴

The activity of cabinetmaker John Parr, who operated in the capital city from 1806–31, served as the springboard from which this study began. A principal in the partnership of Parr and Parker in 1806, Parr maintained his own “cabinet wareroom” on Richardson Street (today’s Main Street) from at least 1814 to 1831.⁵ There, he sold case furniture and chairs “made under [his] immediate inspection,”⁶ in addition to “elegant,” often mahogany, furniture.” Parr, like later cabinetmakers, also furnished funerals, a side business requiring both the joinery

skills of a craftsman and the requisite materials of his trade, namely a selection of boards and hardware. For those citizens so disposed, he supplied mahogany coffins, which in 1821 commanded the sum of \$45.00.⁸ Evidence indicates that Parr's career in Columbia proved very successful, for a time. According to the 1820 Census, he owned two enslaved men and three women, who, based on their ages, most likely constituted an entire family.⁹ By this time, the cabinetmaker most likely lived in the stately Federal-style townhouse he is known to have had built on the corner of Sumter and Plain (now Hampton) streets, not far from his store.¹⁰ By the spring of 1831, Parr's prosperity may have waned, as he owned no slaves and he had informed the public of his decision to close his business.¹¹ To date, no example of Parr's work has been identified, nor have any of his contemporaries been associated with specific pieces.

Columbians interested in cabinet ware such as "Side-Boards; Ward-Robes; Double-scroll Sofas, with Pillows; Ladies' Dressing Bureaus with Toilet Glass; Writing, Dress, and Book Cases; Dining, Pillar, Claw, Tea, Centre [sic], and Leg Tables" or "Wash-stands; Secretaries with draws [sic];" and "Mahogany and French Bed Steads" need not have worried over Parr's departure from the local furniture scene. All of these items could be had "at reduced prices" from Elihu Brittin, who operated from 1831 to 1837.¹² Apparently, Brittin imported these and other pieces, which came to include mahogany, fancy, cane seat, Windsor and children's chairs as well as marble-top tables, from outside of the area.¹³ Additionally, the Elizabethtown, New Jersey, immigrant repaired furniture "at the shortest of notice" and attended to funerals with his own hearse.¹⁴ Much of the same furnishings also were readily available at Peter Clissey's carriage making and upholstery business, which he ran from 1817 to 1831.¹⁵ Further similar goods and others, including mahogany Venetian blinds, were sold by no fewer than three other cabinet-makers in 1838.¹⁶ Nevertheless, like that of Parr, no example of Brittin's, Clissey's, or their furniture has yet been found.

Instances of early-nineteenth-century furniture with attribution to Columbia and Richland County do exist, however. Two such pieces, a circa-1800 Pembroke table (*Figure 3*) and a Sheraton-style dining



FIGURE 3. Pembroke table;
Richland County or Columbia,
SC; 1795–1810. Mahogany; HOA:
28½", WOA: 37½", DOA: 30⅞".
*Collection of Historic Columbia Founda-
tion, Acc. 2004.3.1. Photograph courtesy
of George Williams.*



FIGURE 4. Dining table; Richland County, SC; 1810–20. Mahogany; HOA:
29½", WOA: 46¾", LOA: 107¾". *Collection of Historic Columbia Foundation, Acc.
2003.4.1. Photograph courtesy of George Williams.*



FIGURE 5. Sideboard; Camden or Columbia, SC; 1805–15. Mahogany and mahogany veneer with yellow pine; HOA: 45³/₈" , WOA: 64" , DOA: 21¹/₄" . *Collection of Historic Columbia Foundation, Acc. 2002.7.1. Photograph courtesy of Historic Columbia Foundation.*



FIGURE 6. Card table; Richland County, SC; ca. 1815. *Private collection.*

room table (*Figure 4*) made about 1815, offer nicely contrasting examples of furnishings accepted as being made in Richland County. Both feature the same familial provenance, having once been associated with the Adams family of lower Richland County. One of the largest land and slave-holding families in that area, its planter-class elite members could have afforded to commission furnishings from Lowcountry cabinetmakers or from northern or foreign firms as they wished. The existence of these tables, especially that of the mahogany and yellow pine dining table, indicates that locally produced work, executed at a high level of competency in fashionable style found elsewhere, met with the family's approval. Of the two pieces, the Pembroke table, rendered in mahogany primary and yellow pine and ash secondary woods, is more crude and heavier in appearance. Nonetheless, its chunky form is downplayed somewhat by its original and visually delicate brass basket pull.

Two other neoclassical examples with Richland County attribution are a Sheraton sideboard (*Figure 5*), made about 1815, and a circa-1800 card table (*Figure 6*). Today, the sideboard and the Adams family tables are part of Historic Columbia Foundation's permanent collection.¹⁷ The sideboard is attributed to the same, though as-of-yet unidentified, cabinetmaker who produced three work tables, one of which is held in MESDA's collection (*Figure 7*).¹⁸ The card table in *Figure 6* is among a handful of privately owned Columbia pieces cataloged by MESDA that includes work tables and desk/secretary and bookcase combinations.¹⁹ A Pembroke table (*Figure 8*) may serve as another example of furniture with a Richland County origin, although the piece, made between 1795 and 1810, currently is attributed to either Columbia or Camden.²⁰

By 1840, Columbia had entered a golden era of heightened economic and social vitality that lasted until the coming of the Civil War. With their city having gained ground on Charleston as South Carolina's center for commerce, politics, and education, Columbians for the next two decades looked to new fashions to express this prosperity and cosmopolitan aspirations. Embracing the demands of those eager

FIGURE 7. Work table; Columbia or Camden, SC; 1805–15. Mahogany and mahogany and maple veneer with tulip poplar and yellow pine; HOA: 30¹/₈" , WOA: 20⁷/₈" , DOA: 15³/₁₆" . *MESDA Acq. 3408*.



FIGURE 8. Pembroke table; Columbia or Camden, SC; 1795–1810. Mahogany and mahogany veneer with tulip poplar and yellow pine; HOA: 28³/₄" , WOA (closed): 21¹/₈" ; WOA (open): 38⁷/₈" , DOA: 29³/₄" . *MRF S-5968*.



FIGURE 9. Swan's neck rocking chair by Jeremiah C. Price; Columbia, SC; 1842. *Private collection.*

for new furnishings were cabinetmakers supplying fashionable goods, often at Charleston or northern prices. Unlike the well-documented work of Charleston's earlier artisans, examples of furnishings made in Columbia or Richland County have proven elusive to historians and antiquarians attempting to reconstruct this aspect of local history; however, findings made over the past two years have served as a watershed event in this research. One of the most exciting discoveries, and one that marks a turning point in a quest that until now has yielded modest results, is that of a swan's-neck rocking chair attributed to cabinetmaker Jeremiah C. Price (*Figure 9*).

A New Jersey native, Price was one of several immigrants from the Garden State who established cabinetmaking enterprises in Columbia during the 1840s and 1850s.²¹ Documents found within the South Carolina Library and the South Carolina Department of Archives and History indicate Price operated in Columbia from 1843 until 1850.²² However, graffiti scrawled on the rocker's inside frame by its maker place Price in the capital city one year earlier. As if to ensure his place in history, the cabinetmaker signed his work in two places. On the top stretcher he wrote, "Made by J.C. Price/Columbia, SoCar/1842" and on the bottom stretcher, "Columbia, SoCar/1842/When this chair is unliked/and this writing is discovered/the South will be in/fear of a pestilence." The second inscription, perhaps nothing more than a playful invective, nonetheless strikes an ominous and eerie tone in light of the sectionalism that would result in civil war years later. Whether or not Price continued to adorn other items he crafted with personal passages remains to be seen. Despite any potential regional bias he may have harbored, by the autumn of 1847 Price forecast a bright future for his business. By then, he was "engag[ing] the services of several first rate workmen . . . manufacturing a large and splendid assortment of FURNITURE of entirely new patterns . . . the workmanship of which [is] warranted as good, or better than any that can be brought from the North."²³

By far Columbia's most prolific cabinetmaker and furniture dealer was Milo Hoyt Berry. A native of Dover, New Jersey, Berry apparent-

ly came to Columbia via Charleston.²⁴ Accounts conflict over Berry's initial relationship with the Palmetto State. One source places him in Charleston as early as the winter of 1838, sent by his Newark, New Jersey, employer with furniture and curtains for the newly constructed Charleston Hotel.²⁵ The imposing Greek Revival building, "virtually finished" by late March, met a catastrophic end during a fire that broke out one month later on 27–28 April 1838.²⁶ Multiple other sources indicate that Berry, an "expert cabinetmaker," arrived in Columbia in 1843 or 1844, shortly after completing his contract to furnish the "new" hotel in Charleston.²⁷ If this is true, then Berry's work in the port city most likely was part of renovations that the hotel underwent during the middle of 1843 and prior to its reopening under the new management of J.H. Nickerson in late October.²⁸

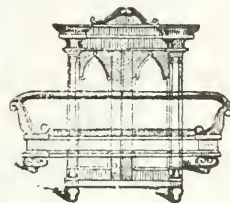
While the exact date of Berry's move to Columbia may not be known, an advertisement posted in a September 1848 edition of the *South Carolinian* indicates his collaborating with fellow New Jersey transplant Jeremiah Price as early as 1843 (Figure 10). The duo left an interesting legacy that involved supplying both private individuals and governmental bodies with various furnishings as well as repairing sundry articles. For instance, in the estate papers of John J. Caldwell, Price & Berry are credited with providing the Columbia hotelier with items such as a pine cupboard and bookcase, two large settees, a bureau, a washstand, a center table, bedsteads, and Windsor maple and mahogany arm chairs, in addition to cleaning, repairing, and varnishing furniture. The fact that payment for these, and other ancillary goods and tasks, had not been made during the period 19 April 1848 to 8 March 1850 suggests that the partners may have been excessive in their extension of

FURNITURE WARE ROOM,
OPPOSITE GRACEY & HART'S,
MAIN STREET,

COLUMBIA, SO. CA.

PRICE & BERRY,
MANUFACTURERS.

WORLD would be useful to order their thanks for the liberal and increasing patronage they have received, and give notice to their customers that they have now on hand a large assortment of FURNITURE of their own manufacturing, of entirely new pattern, which will be sold at prices to suit the times, and every article warranted to be well made. Furniture that is not manufactured by us.



Being both experienced workmen, they feel confident they can manufacture work in such a style as to merit a continuance of the favors of their customers so liberally extended during the last five years, and would call attention to the rapid increase of their business as evidence of their ability to meet all the wants and tastes of the public in their line of business.



Their stock includes a variety of very superior SOFAS, SIDE-BOARDS, BOOK-CASES, BUREAUS, WARD-ROBES, CHAIRS, BED-STEADS, LOUNGES, TABLES, VENETIAN BLINDS, and WINDOW SHADES.

Together with all other articles usually manufactured in such establishments, all of which they can recommend as the most elegant and tasteful, fashionable and durable, and finished workmanship.

They are prepared to offer such inducements to purchasers as cannot fail to compare well with any other establishment, whether their articles are manufactured here or imported.

ALSO, ON HAND,
A large assortment of
WALL PAPER,

direct from the Manufactory, of entirely new patterns, which will be sold very low.

**WILLOW WAGONS, CRADLES,
WINDOW SHADES, BLINDS,
MATTRESSES, &c. &c.**

☞ FUNEAL CALLS promptly attended to at any hour of the day or night, in either the town or country.

Ladies and Gentlemen are invited to call and inspect our stock before purchasing elsewhere.

Sept. 12 1848. **PRICE & BERRY.**

FIGURE 10. Price and Berry partnership advertisement, *South Carolinian*, 26 September 1848.

credit or that, like many artisans in this era, they had difficulty collecting for services rendered. Ultimately, it would take two years after the completion of their final job, which involved constructing a mahogany coffin, engraving its plate, and bricking up a grave, for the bill to be satisfied.²⁹

During Price and Berry's experience with Caldwell, the partners plied Columbians with a variety of "very superior" sofas, sideboards, bookcases, wardrobes, lounges, cradles, and window shades and blinds.³⁰ They also performed work for the state senate, which involved constructing a "letter box" that resulted in lodging a petition with the Committee in Claims and Grievance for payment of \$30.00.³¹ By April 1850, the partners dissolved their joint effort when Price sold his interest to Berry.³² Following a short-lived venture producing daguerreotypes from July to September, Price apparently left Columbia and returned to New Jersey.³³

To date, no item manufactured by the Berry & Price partnership has been identified; however, an example of Berry's activity during the years shortly after the dissolution of his partnership with Price may have been found in a pair of swan's-neck hallstands, currently flanking the entry to South Caroliniana Library's reading room (*Figures 11 and 12*). According to its 1854 treasurer's report, South Carolina College paid Berry \$30.00 to make two "Hat Racks" for its library the previous year.³⁴ With the library insulated from much of the physical upheaval brought to the college during the Civil War, the "hat racks" mentioned in this report may well be those depicted in an 1875 *carte de visite* of the building's interior.³⁵ Sharing a similar, albeit lesser accomplished, interpretation of the hat racks' swan's-head motif is a rocking chair (not illustrated) found within the same private collection that yielded the "Price" rocker. Whether this is an example of Berry's earliest work with Price is unknown; however, the basic likeness to the more graceful renditions found on the later hat racks merits mentioning.³⁶

Furniture with absolute attribution to Berry does exist.³⁷ Descendants own at least three pieces, including a marble-top side table (not il-



FIGURE 12. Detail from hallstand in *Figure 11*.

FIGURE 11. Swan's neck hallstand attributed to Milo Hoyt Berry; Columbia, SC; ca. 1854. *Collection of South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina. Photograph courtesy of South Caroliniana Library.*



FIGURE 14. Marble-top cabinet by Milo Hoyt Berry; Columbia, SC; ca. 1870. Mahogany with yellow pine, tulip poplar, and cedrella; HOA: 42 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", WOA: 36", DOA: 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". *Private collection.*



FIGURE 13. Marble-top chest of drawers with mirror by Milo Hoyt Berry; Columbia, SC; ca. 1870. Mahogany with yellow pine, tulip poplar, and cedrella; HOA: 96", WOA: 46 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", DOA: 21". *Private collection.*

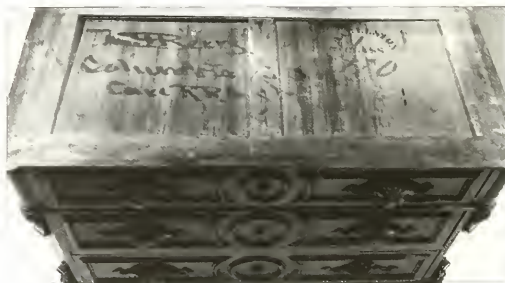


FIGURE 15. Milo Hoyt Berry inscription on the marble-top cabinet in *Figure 14*.

lustrated), dresser (*Figure 13*), and washstand (*Figure 14*), all of which fortunately retain their maker's mark. A paper label from Berry's establishment remains tacked to the side table's frame; whereas both pieces of case furniture bear the inscriptions, "MH Berry/Columbia SC/[undecipherable]RR" in hand-painted lettering and, in black stenciling, "CHARLESTON CLASS," underneath their marble tops (*Figure 15*).³⁸ Aside from furniture, other Berry artifacts remain in the family's possession, including an enameled tin business sign, which hung outside his Main Street store (*Figure 16*), and a photograph of the cabinetmaker himself (*Figure 17*). At least one certified Berry piece (not illustrated) exists outside these institutional and family collections.³⁹ A circa 1855 swivel-top, pillar-and-scroll style card table that bears the stenciling, "From/M.H. Berry/ Manufacturer/Columbia, SC," represents yet another facet of the cabinetmaker's merchandise. The card table is constructed of walnut primary and yellow pine secondary woods with a red wash applied to the table's interior surfaces.

Vying for customers with Price & Berry was the partnership of yet another New Jersey duo, Abraham C. Squier and George S. Bower.⁴⁰ Squier, hailing from Rahway, had entered the Columbia furniture market earlier, in 1831, by offering fancy chairs on consignment at his clothing store.⁴¹ Seven years later, he became far more heavily involved in the furniture trade after buying out his father-in-law, the cabinetmaker Elihu Brittin.⁴² Squier expanded Brittin's earlier offerings to include bedsteads of cherry, bird's-eye, curled, and plain maple, and Egyptian and veined marble-topped sideboards, bureaus, center tables, and double washstands.⁴³ Beyond simply repairing furniture Squier advertised pieces could be made to order, suggesting that he had



FIGURE 16. Enameled tin business sign for Milo Hoyt Berry; Columbia, SC; ca. 1870. *Private collection.*



FIGURE 17. Photograph of Milo Hoyt Berry by W.A. Reckling; Columbia, SC; ca. 1885. *Private collection.*

begun manufacturing items in-house.⁴⁴ By late 1839, Squier became the “appointed agent” for the “Hay’s Rocking and Reclining Chair,” particularly suited to “Dropsical, Asthmatic, Gouty, and Rheumatic patients” though “when suitably finished . . . [was] an elegant parlor chair.”⁴⁵ Within three years, Squier had established his partnership with Bower and soon the two were selling furnishings “made at their own manufactory” in Columbia.⁴⁶ Additionally, they carried “a general assortment of mahogany plank, boards, veneers, turnings, cabinet makers hardware,” and sundry items necessary in furniture production sold “cheap for cash or approved paper.”⁴⁷

The Squier and Bower manufactory produced items with both residential and institutional clients in mind. According to its December 1844 minutes, South Carolina College paid Squier and Bower \$406.00 “to furnish suitable tables and chairs for the Board.” In fulfilling this order the partners supplied “Ten circular tables to form a perfect circle, at \$20/12 sett {sic} fine chair cushions at \$2.20 each . . . /12 Mahogany French arm chairs at \$14/12 sett {sic} fine cushions for do. at \$2.20.” Included in their bill to the college were line items for “Putting on cushions on 1 doz chairs & tufting do.” and “cash paid freight” for the chairs,” the latter of which seems to imply that the chairs were imported into the city while the tables were produced locally at their manufactory.⁴⁸

Records indicate that at least three out of these four relocated New Jersey cabinetmakers both made and/or repaired furniture for South Carolina College’s two literary and oratory societies. For instance, in January 1844, the Euphradian Society settled an earlier debt of \$14.00 with Squier and Bower for repairing a chair.⁴⁹ The partners performed further, though unspecified, work for the organization in March 1847 that earned them \$4.25.⁵⁰ In January 1851, Berry received \$250.00 from the Clariosophic Society, a sum great enough to suggest it covered the purchase of goods.⁵¹ A month later he supplied the society with a “painted press” and in April and May he received \$45.00 and \$60.00, respectively, figures that indicate furniture purchases or extensive repairs to existing items.⁵² In January 1852, the college paid Berry \$23.62

for furnishing its observatory and an unspecified amount in July 1855 for a sofa for College Hall.⁵³

This activity corresponded to what University of South Carolina historian Dan Hollis once described as the “golden age” of South Carolina College, an era which spanned from 1835 to 1855.⁵⁴ During this period, the institution built its library (1840), as well as Legaré and Harper colleges (1848). The construction of the colleges granted both the Clariosophic and Euphradian societies new chambers, which were located on the buildings’ third stories and were furnished by each organization’s respective members.⁵⁵ Fortunately, many of both societies’ furnishings remain intact today, though none has been identified as to having been built or sold by a specific cabinetmaker. The surviving pieces offer insight into the styles that would have been popular in some circles at the time, and their composition of walnut (or mahogany) veneers over yellow pine suggests local manufacture.

In the case of the Clariosophic Society, a heavily modified Empire style snap-top-table-turned-speaker’s-podium (*Figures 18 and 19*) appears to indicate frugality on the part of the organization and ingenuity on the part of a local artisan. The identity of the craftsman who pared down the table’s circular top to form a diamond-shaped shield on which the society’s Greek letters and year of founding were emblazoned remains anonymous. And, while the method he employed to create the podium’s book rest appears relatively crude on close inspection, at a distance the transformation from table to speaker’s stand remains successful.

Today, examples of the Clariosophic Society’s hall furnishings are held within the collections of the McKissick Museum. The greater numbers of Euphradian Society furnishings that remain intact owe their longevity to both the Civil War, and, more recently, a restoration of the society’s chambers by the University of South Carolina. On 25 June 1862, the Confederacy began using six of the college’s buildings as a hospital to accommodate increasing numbers of casualties. Both Harper and Legaré colleges were among these buildings, although faculty residences, the library, bursary, and College Hall were not. Perhaps it was at this

FIGURE 18. Empire style snap-top-table-turned-speaker's podium; Columbia, SC; ca. 1855. *Collection of the McKissick Museum, University of South Carolina. Photograph courtesy of the McKissick Museum.*



FIGURE 19. Detail of the speaker's podium shown in *Figure 18*.

time that the Clariosophic Society moved its impressive octagonal marble-topped center table (not illustrated) to the college's library. Today, the piece adorns the entrance hall to the same building, though in 1875 it was located in the building's reading room. Fortunately, the society's other important furniture, including a large Gothic speaker's bench and chair and a speaker's podium (not illustrated) are preserved in the restored chambers at Harper College. Though their age has yet to be determined, the chamber's scores of armchairs (not illustrated) appear to have been added much later as they feature burlled inlay and turnings consistent with early Eastlake styling of the 1870s. It remains uncertain as to whether or not any of these pieces were manufactured locally or were imported from outside of Columbia.

Columbia's and Richland County's cabinetmaking and furniture marketing endeavors enjoyed a broader audience than simply that of the immediate area. In at least one instance, the industriousness of one business, that of Dr. W.F. Percival, garnered national recognition. Located "a few miles" from Columbia, potentially to the east in today's Dentsville neighborhood, Percival's "chair factory and turnery . . . produced chairs of beautiful and varied patterns, some of them original in design, and superior, as effecting comfort and elegance, to any . . . seen of northern make."⁵⁶ According to *DeBow's Review* in 1853, the enterprise benefited from "skilful and eminently practical management, made by the judicious intermingling of slave male and female labor with that of the native whites and their imported tutors." Under this scheme Percival's factory produced "plain and ornamental" cane-seat, Windsor, cottage, office, rocking, dining, and child's table chairs from the surrounding stock of trees that yielded oak, bird's-eye and straight-grained maple, walnut, beach, hickory, birch, elm, and China-tree wood."⁵⁷ The establishment, which ran from at least December 1852 to October 1853, strove to win clients outside its immediate community including farther north in Yorkville, South Carolina, near Charlotte.⁵⁸

During the 1850s, cabinetmaking and furniture purveying in Columbia and Richland County experienced considerable growth, so

much so that by the end of the decade no fewer than twenty-eight individuals had operated in the area, an increase of over 300 percent from the number who had worked there in the 1840s.⁵⁹ While some of these artisans proved relatively transient, others, such as Squier, Bower, and Berry, remained constant, thanks most likely to established clientele and the introduction of newer technology. For Squier, this success came despite great personal tragedy the previous decade when he lost five children to scarlet fever within five weeks and his furniture business to fire all in the same year.⁶⁰ Berry also overcame an almost total loss of his business to a fire and the death of two young children.⁶¹ And Bower, now working independently of Squier, with whom he previously had supplied Columbians with “a great variety of fine and plain furniture, of very low prices for cash, both from their own manufactory . . . and from late arrivals from New York,” continued to operate as a “manufacturer and dealer in furniture, chairs, and Fisk’s celebrate metallic burial cases.”⁶² Initially, an octagonal high-post bed (not illustrated) contained within the collections of the South Carolina State Museum was thought to be the work of Bower’s cabinet shop, based on the presence of his name and that of “Columbia, SC” on one of its slats. However, the letters and numerals “C.LEE61” stamped into the bed’s side, head, and foot rails proved problematic in assigning a clear attribution. One hypothesis was that they indicated the bed’s owner and year of purchase, as a Caroline Lee was known to have resided in Columbia during the 1860s. However, further research indicated that the probable “C. Lee” was that of a Manchester, Massachusetts, manufacturer who exported hundreds of beds to the South before and immediately after the Civil War⁶³. Perhaps then, the slats originally were part of the crate that Bower’s shop used in shipping the bed or another piece of furniture to its owner.

Other furnishings, known to have been associated with antebellum Columbia and Richland County families, and most likely made locally, have been located in both museum and private collections. Two examples of such pieces include a plain style, black walnut and yellow pine chest of drawers (*Figure 20*), formerly owned by antebellum



FIGURE 20. Chest of drawers; Columbia, SC; 1845–65. Walnut with yellow pine and tulip poplar; HOA: 48 $\frac{3}{4}$ " , WOA: 40 $\frac{1}{4}$ " , DOA: 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". *Collection of Historic Columbia Foundation, Acc. 2001.5.1–8. Photograph courtesy of Historic Columbia Foundation.*

insurance salesman George Huggins, and a much more refined secretary and bookcase (not illustrated) now owned by a Harmon family member in neighboring Lexington County.⁶⁴ By combining the evidence discussed here with that found in MESDA's research files, which include examples of early Columbia and Richland County pieces, one achieves a greater appreciation for the impact that Fall Line cabinetmakers had on South Carolina's decorative arts.

The nature and impact of cabinetmaking in Columbia and Richland County from 1800 to 1860 is just beginning to be understood. Business ventures, partnerships, and market speculation often proved short-lived as newspaper advertisements from that period attest. Amid the ebb and flow of the local cabinetmaking industry a handful of craftsmen established lasting roots in the city. Supplying locally produced wares and imported goods, these entrepreneurs left their mark in the area's homes, schools, and government buildings. To what extent the area developed local interpretations of more national or international styles remains to be seen. However, contrary to popular belief, all evidence of Columbia and Richland County's antebellum cabinetmaking industry did not vanish in 1865 amid the ruins of some of its artisans' manufactories and warerooms. Rather, the complete story awaits discovery in area archives, museums, and private collections, as initial findings attest.

JOHN SHERRER is Director of Collections and Interpretation at the Historic Columbia Foundation. In November 2002, he was instrumental in assembling members from a consortium of museums, historic sites, and cultural agencies in the Columbia/Lexington area of South Carolina and faculty from the University of South Carolina to form the *Fall Line Seminar* for the purpose of identifying, researching, and interpreting the eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and early-twentieth-century material culture of South Carolina's Fall Line region. Since that time this consortium has held regular meetings; conducted research trips to collections containing Fall Line material culture; and publicly presented its findings on this hitherto neglected aspect of state and regional history. He may be contacted via e-mail at jsherrer@HistoricColumbia.org.

NOTES

1. I am indebted to several colleagues within the Fall Line Consortium, particularly Katherine Johnson Gillespie, Rebecca Phillips, and Katherine Grier, whose assistance made this essay possible, and to the staffs of Historic Columbia Foundation and the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts.
2. John Hammond Moore, *Columbia and Richland County: A South Carolina Community 1740–1990* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1992), 79.
3. Ronald L. Hurst and Jonathan Prown, *Southern Furniture, 1680–1830: The Colonial Williamsburg Collection* (New York: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and Harry N. Abrams, 1997), 35.
4. For this study, the term “Fall Line” specifically refers to the area within South Carolina at which the rivers cease to be navigable from the Lowcountry to the Backcountry. The general use of the term denotes the natural boundary between an upland and lowland, such as a piedmont and a coastal plain, usually identified by waterfalls and rapids in a river and changes in temperature and humidity.
5. Bradford L. Rauschenberg and John Bivins Jr., *The Furniture of Charleston, 1680–1820* (Winston-Salem, NC: Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, 2003), 598, 1157–1158. According to Rauschenberg and Bivins, William D. Parker was an English immigrant who spent time in Charleston and New York prior to moving to Columbia. He died in Camden in 1819 at the age of forty-four.
6. *South Carolina State Gazette and Columbian Advertiser*, Columbia, 23 June 1827, 3.
7. *Southern Times and State Gazette*, Columbia, 23 March 1831, 3.
8. Laura Jervey Hopkins, *Lower Richland County Planters: Hopkins, Adams, Weston, and Related Families of South Carolina* (n.p.: privately printed, 1976), 84.
9. *1820 Census for Richland County, South Carolina*, Bureau of the Census, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia; South Carolina. According to the records, the Parr family included one enslaved male under the ages of ten and one enslaved male between the ages of twenty-six and forty-five; two enslaved women were under the age of fourteen, and one was between the ages of twenty-six and forty-five.
10. Edwin J. Scott, *Random Recollections of a Long Life, 1806 to 1876*, rev. ed. (1884; repr., Columbia, SC: The R.L. Bryan Company, 1980), 39. Scott recollects the location of Parr’s furniture shop and suggests the cabinetmaker had enjoyed success in his trade as “Mr. Parr built a fine brick dwelling on the Northeast corner of Plain and Sumter Streets, which was afterwards owned by . . . R.W. Gibbes till burnt by General Sherman.”
11. *South Carolina State Gazette and Columbian Advertiser*, Columbia, 23 June 1827, 3.
12. *Southern Times and State Gazette*, Columbia, 5 March 1831, 4.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *The Columbia Hive*, 10 September 1836, 2; *Southern Times and State Gazette*, Columbia, 24 February 1837, 4.
15. Entry for Peter Clissey, *Index of Early Southern Artists and Artisans*, MESDA; *South Carolina State Gazette and Columbian Advertiser*, Columbia, 29 June 1819, 4; *South Carolina State Gazette and Columbian Advertiser*, Columbia, 29 November 1828, 3; *Southern Times and State Gazette*, Columbia, 16 March 1831, 3.
16. *Columbia Telescope*, 20 October 1838; *Southern Times and State Gazette*, Columbia, 27 July 1838, 4. In 1838, John Carter, James Hepburn, and William B. Purves all maintained cabinetmaking businesses in the city that offered such goods as sideboards, tables, bureaus, bedsteads, etc.
17. The pieces’ accession numbers are 2002.7.1 (sideboard), 2003.4.1 (dining table), and 2004.3.1 (Pembroke table).

18. Rauschenberg and Bivins, *The Furniture of Charleston*, 652–653.
19. Antiques dealer John Kemp of Edgefield, South Carolina, who also owns a secretary and bookcase that MESDA has attributed to Richland County, owns the neoclassical card table.
20. Rauschenberg and Bivins, *The Furniture of Charleston*, 702.
21. MESDA 2004 Summer Institute graduate Karherine Johnson has conducted initial research on these transplanted New Jersey cabinetmakers and currently is investigating the impact their manufactured and imported furniture had on Columbia and Richland County.
22. *South Carolinian*, Columbia, 28 March 1844, 1; *Trueweekly South Carolinian*, Columbia, 3 September 1850, 3. The initial date of submission for Price's advertisement, which ran in the 28 March 1844 issue of the *South Carolinian*, was 16 November, thereby establishing the fact that the cabinetmaker was in business in Columbia in 1843.
23. *South Carolinian*, Columbia, 5 October 1847, 3.
24. Julian A. Selby, *Memoir and Anecdotal Reminiscences of Columbia, S.C.* (Columbia, SC: R.L. Bryan Company, 1905), 7.
25. *Ibid.*
26. Kenneth Severens, *Charleston: Antebellum Architecture and Civic Destiny*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1988), 102.
27. D.P. Robbins, *Historical and Descriptive Sketch of Columbia, South Carolina: The Surroundings and Advantages Plainly Portrayed from a Matter of Fact Standpoint* (Columbia, SC: Presbyterian Publishing House, 1888), 89; Obituary, *The State*, Columbia, 3 March 1907; Clare M. McCall, *A History of Richland Lodge No. 39 Ancient Free Masons of South Carolina at Columbia, South Carolina* (Columbia, SC: R.L. Bryan Company, 1991), 345–346; 1850 *Census for Richland County, South Carolina*, Bureau of the Census, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, South Carolina; 1860 *Census for Richland County, South Carolina*, Bureau of the Census, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, South Carolina. Following the fire of 1838, the Charleston Hotel's stockholders had the structure quickly rebuilt. By 1840, their investment was failing financially and the City of Charleston purchased the hotel the following year.
28. *The Charleston Mercury*, 27 June 1843; *Ibid.*, 31 August 1843; *Ibid.*, 3 October 1843; *Ibid.*, 31 October 1843.
29. Probate entry for John J. Caldwell, 15 June 1852, Caldwell Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina.
30. *South Carolinian*, Columbia, 26 September 1848, 3.
31. Petition of JC Price and MH Berry, Committee in Claims and Grievance, Series #16015, Year=ND00, Item #004433, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, SC; *Ibid.*, Series #S1655005, Year 1848, Item #00158; *Ibid.*, Series #S165018, Year 1849, Item #0040.
32. *Trueweekly South Carolinian*, Columbia, 25 April 1850, 3.
33. *Ibid.*, 3 September 1850, 3.
34. "Report of the College Treasurer, South Carolina College," 3 December 1853, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina.
35. *Carte de visite* "South Carolina College Library," 1875, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina; Terry and Ralph Kovel, *American Country Furniture, 1780–1875* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1963), 228. Spool furniture was a style so popular by 1840 that factories were producing turnings for sale to cabinetmakers for the production of furniture incorporating this type of decoration. Due to the simplicity of the spool turnings in the hallstands at South Caroliniana Library these examples seem to represent an earlier type of this style of furniture that utilized long straight lengths of turnings.
36. While investigating probate records Historic Columbia Foundation, researcher Rebecca

Phillips identified and contacted a direct descendent of cabinetmaker M. H. Berry who owns a rocker with a similar swan-neck motif. The actual date of construction for this walnut rocker, which is larger in stature, remains in question.

37. Site visit with collectors by author, 7 December 2005. In addition to the marble-top case furniture and table, this collection may include side chairs, a secretary, bedsteads, and a piano stool made and/or sold at Berry's furniture manufactory. While all of these pieces have descended along with the furniture positively attributed to Berry, they bear no maker's marks.

38. The inscriptions on both the marble-top washstand and dresser raise the questions as to what condition the pieces were in and what was their point of origin prior to being shipped through the port of Charleston for final delivery via rail to Berry in Columbia. Are the boards on which the inscriptions were painted the remnants of shipping crates in which partially completed furniture was shipped? Or did the apparently recycled crates simply hold materials such as appliqué moldings, escutcheons, etc., that Berry's manufactory used when building its case furniture?

39. Site visit with a collector by the author; 16 October 2006. Found within a private Columbia, South Carolina, collection, this example of Berry's work was purchased at auction in Winnsborough, South Carolina, a town in the fall line zone about twenty-five miles north of Columbia, and formerly home to many of the cabinetmaker's descendants through his first marriage.

40. 1850 Richland County Census, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, South Carolina. Bower's town of origin is not mentioned. He is simply listed as a 33-year-old cabinetmaker from New Jersey.

41. *Columbia Free Press and Hite*, 16 April 1831.

42. *South Carolinian*, Columbia, 20 November 1838, 4.

43. *Ibid.*

44. *Ibid.*

45. *Columbia Telescope*, 11 December 1839, 3.

46. *Genealogical Records of Mamie Squier Poyner, 1885–1962*, Manuscript Collection, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina.

47. *South Carolina Temperance Advocate*, Columbia, 28 November 1844, 4.

48. Bill for Payment, 18 December 1844, South Carolina College Minutes, Manuscripts Division, South Caroliniana Library, Columbia, South Carolina. The document in question was found in the division's "museum box," an un-indexed body of documents created in the 1930s for the "museum" collection once housed in the building.

49. Records of the Treasurer of the Euphradian Society, 22 January 1844, South Carolina College, Manuscripts Division, South Caroliniana Library, Columbia, South Carolina.

50. *Ibid.*, 6 March 1847.

51. Receipt book, Clariosophic Society, South Carolina College, 13 January 1851, Manuscripts Division, South Caroliniana Library, Columbia, South Carolina.

52. *Ibid.*, 28 February 1851; *Ibid.*, 5 April 1851; *Ibid.*, 5 May 1851.

53. Report of the College Treasurer, South Carolina College, 1 January 1852, Manuscript Division, South Caroliniana Library, Columbia, South Carolina; *Ibid.*, 1 July 1855.

54. Daniel Walker Hollis, *University of South Carolina*, Volume I. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1951), 149.

55. *Ibid.*

56. J.D.B. DeBow, *DeBow's Review*, (New Orleans: J.D.B. De Bow, 1853), 622–623.

57. *Ibid.*

58. *York Miscellany*, Yorkville, South Carolina, 19 October 1853, 3; *Daily South Carolinian*, Columbia, 9 December 1852, 3; *Ibid.*, 4 March 1853, 3.

59. Cabinetmakers Index for Columbia and Richland County, Historic Columbia Founda-

tion Archives, Columbia, South Carolina. The index for the 1840s and 1850s indicates 9 and 20 cabinetmakers operating within those years, respectively. Listings were generated through census records and newspaper advertisements for those decades.

60. Selby, *Memorabilia and Anecdotal Reminiscences of Columbia, S.C.*, 48. Squier's losses occurred in 1844.

61. Berry family burial plots located within the cemetery at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Columbia, SC; *Ibid.*, 91. Selby recalls a fire heavily damaged the shop that Berry shared with his partner J.C. Price. While some moveable items were saved from the conflagration, apparently the business' entire stock of coffins, located within the building's basement were destroyed.

62. *South Carolinian*, Columbia, 10 December 1847, 3; *Daily South Carolinian*, Columbia, 18 November 1852, 1.

63. Stephen Harrison, "'C. Lee': Maker of Bedsteads for the Southern Market," *Mame Antiques Digest*, April 1994: 28–29a. At this time no connection between Bower and Lee has been established, and it is unknown whether the Columbia cabinetmaker was importing goods from this northern bedstead manufacturer.

64. The Huggins family chest of drawers (HCF 2001.5.178) features a two-over-three graduated drawer configuration. On the rear panel of the second drawer is an inscription that reads "GH June 28 [or 18], 1860 [or 1865]," though there is no indication as to its maker.

The Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers of Richmond, Virginia

J. CHRISTIAN KOLBE

THE FOLLOWING NOTICE was published in the 29 May 1832 issue of the *Richmond Constitutional Whig* in Virginia (Figure 1):

To Journeymen Cabinet Makers, and all others whom it may concern

At a meeting of the Equitable Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers, held in this City on Wednesday evening, the 23d inst., the following resolution was unanimously adopted and ordered to be published.

Whereas, it is deemed pernicious both to the interest of Journeymen Cabinet Makers, and purchasers of Furniture generally, that coloured persons should be employed in the manufacturing of Furniture—to the former, because of the degraded society to which they are subject—to the latter, by account of the imperfect manner with which they dispatch work—furthermore, for the reason that it is becoming very much the practice of those conducting that business, to purchase or take as apprentices, expecting to be taught by us, persons of that class.

Resolved, That we will, from and after the 4th day of July next, abandon any shop where such persons are in any way employed. Due notice will be given through the medium of newspapers, of the cases where the services of coloured persons are continued.

Signed by
THE COMMITTEE¹

In order to understand the motivations that drove the journeymen cabinetmakers to publish their notice it is necessary to recognize the

FIGURE 1. The Journeymen Cabinet Makers of Richmond notice in the 29 May 1832 issue of the *Richmond Constitutional Whig*. Courtesy of the Library of Virginia, Film 1604.

Several of the Capitals again sold by BIGGER.

To Journeymen Cabinet Makers, and all others whom it may concern.

A T a meeting of the *Equitable Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers*, held in this City on Wednesday evening the 23d inst., the following resolution was unanimously adopted and ordered to be published.

Whereas, it is deemed pernicious both to the interest of Journeymen Cabinet Makers, and purchasers of Furniture generally, that coloured persons should be employed in the manufacturing of Furniture—to the former, because of the degraded society to which they are subject—to the latter, on account of the imperfect manner with which they dispatch work—furthermore, for the reason that it is becoming very much the practice of those conducting that business, to purchase or take as apprentices, expecting to be taught by us, persons of that class;

Resolved, That we will, from and after the 4th day of July next, abandon any shop where such persons are in any way employed. Due notice will be given, through the medium of newspapers, of cases where the services of coloured persons are continued.

Signed by THE COMMITTEE.

The Petersburg Intelligencer, and Norfolk Herald, will publish the above once, and forward their accounts to the Whig Office for collection.

ma 28—11

changes occurring in the workplace of cabinetmakers, both on the national level and locally in Richmond. The traditional organization of the cabinetmaking shop—consisting of the master, journeymen, and apprentices—was disappearing in early-nineteenth-century America as the country's economy became less locally centered and more dependent on both national and international trade. In an attempt to compete with imported furniture, local shop masters resorted to cutting journeymen's wages and employing cheaper and less-skilled labor.² Master cabinetmakers also introduced cost-saving divided labor practices, hired workers outside of the shop, and utilized machinery to streamline production.³⁻⁴ As a result, journeymen cabinetmakers

no longer worked on a project from beginning to end but instead became more akin to factory workers, contributing individual parts on an assembly line instead of crafting a complete product from which they obtained a sense of accomplishment and pride. Another result of these changes was that the increased amount of capital required to successfully operate a cabinetmaking business within the national and international market made it more difficult for journeymen cabinetmakers to become masters of their own shops. Feeling diminished economically and socially, journeymen cabinetmakers began forming trade associations.⁵ The forerunners of labor unions, trade associations were established in several different trades and sought to maintain just wages and shop practices that would give journeymen a respected position in the community.⁶

The neoclassical card table in Figure 2 reflects many of issues sur-



FIGURE 2. Card table attributed to Robert Poore; Richmond, VA; 1832. Mahogany and mahogany veneer; HOA: 29 $\frac{3}{8}$ " , WOA: 36" , DOA: 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Private collection; photograph courtesy of Sumpter Priddy III, Inc., Alexandria, VA.

rounding the complaints of Richmond's journeymen cabinetmakers and takes on an expanded meaning. The table was made in the shop of Robert Poore during the period of strife between the city's journeymen and the masters of cabinetmaking shops. It was made to compete with the imported luxury furniture desired by local customers of means. To compete with those imports, when the table was made Poore's shop had probably begun incorporating machinery and cost-saving shop practices—and he was employing less-skilled and inexpensive labor. The card table is the product of an urban southern cabinetmaking shop that employed both white and African American artisans, dramatically exemplifying the diverging views of urban southern whites concerning slavery and free blacks.⁷

The first evidence of labor problems in the artisan shops of Richmond surfaced in the 1790s when journeymen cordwainers or shoemakers refused to work for masters who imported goods and utilized African American labor.⁸ The unrest continued and in 1802 the journeymen shoemakers placed a notice in the *Virginia Argus* stating their refusal to work for John McBride because he imported boots and employed African American craftsmen. The complaints that the journeymen shoemakers lodged against shop masters focused on competition from both the national and local levels: On one hand they feared competition from imported northern and foreign products and on the other hand they feared competition from local enslaved labor.⁹

While Richmond's white artisans periodically complained about working with African American artisans, there was a long tradition of white and African American craftsmen working together at the same shop or work site (*Figure 3*).¹⁰ An example of an integrated workplace is described in the following 1818 letter from J. Riddick Jr. of Suffolk to Willis Cowling, a Richmond cabinetmaker:^{11 12}

Dear Sir,

Enclosed you have a receipt for the amount I promised to Pay Mr. James Evans.

I am requested by a Friend to know from you if you want a Boy about 14 years old and a Negro Boy with him to learn them both your Trade or if



FIGURE 3. Photograph of Gilbert Hunt (ca. 1780–1863), c. 1860. Hunt, an enslaved blacksmith, became a hero of the Richmond Theatre fire. Returning home from a church service, Hunt heard cries and, with Dr. James McCaw, saved about a dozen people from the conflagration. Twelve years later, Hunt saved inmates from a fire at the state penitentiary. In 1829 Hunt bought his freedom and moved to Liberia. After less than a year, he returned to Richmond where he died in 1863.

Courtesy of the Prints and Photographs Collection, Library of Virginia.

you should not want them if cou'd recommend any person who wou'd take them and learn them a good Trade your answer will Oblige me.

*I am with Respect
Yours
J. Riddick Jr.*

In 1825 Willis Cowling and John Turpin manumitted Reuben Berry, a slave cabinetmaker.¹³ African Americans, both slave and free, were part of artisan life in Richmond and the journeymen cabinetmakers and shoemakers complaints about enslaved labor were most likely driven less by social anxieties than by an economic fear for their jobs.¹⁴

Along with the evidence for a racially mixed workplace, Willis Cowling's cabinetmaking shop also provides Richmond's first signs of unrest over wages between journeymen cabinetmakers and their masters. Willis Cowling's shop papers contain three lists of prices paid for journeywork for specific furniture forms. The heading "A list of prices paid by Robert Poore and Willis Cowling for Journey work as follows" appears on two of the lists. The third list has the heading "Richmond Oct 10th 1822."¹⁵ The existence of price lists for journeywork suggests differences between journeymen and masters over wages. The price lists from the Cowling shop also indicate that in 1822 Richmond's journeymen cabinetmakers were not yet organized to the point of regulating prices for journeywork.¹⁶ The price lists of Robert Poore and Willis Cowling are an example of masters rather than journeymen trying to establish prices for journeywork.

Looking again at the 1832 newspaper announcement placed by Richmond's Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers within the context of national and local labor issues, their boycott can be seen as a statement made by white artisans who felt they were losing ground economically and socially. It was not by chance that the journeymen cabinetmakers chose July 4th to boycott shops that employed black artisans. The journeymen viewed themselves as patriots of the Revolution fighting against the tyranny of the shop masters who sought to take away their status as independent artisans of a free republic (*Figure 4*).¹⁷

What became of the boycott? An indictment for a misdemeanor filed in the Richmond City Hustings court of 22 September 1832 provides many specifics about the Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers and its subsequent actions. The society was formed 28 May 1832 by seventeen journeymen cabinetmakers.¹⁸ The boycott of July 4th must not have been a complete success, because in the weeks after members of the society went to the cabinetmaking shops of Robert Poore and George Hendree with the intent to persuade their journeymen to leave their masters.¹⁹ ²⁰ On 10 July 1832 the journeymen entered the shop of George Hendree, who employed African American artisans described in the indictment as "persons of color" (i.e. free persons of



FIGURE 4. An engraving after the watercolor by William Goodacre, 1831, depicting the Jefferson-designed capitol of Virginia as it appeared at the time of the discord between Richmond's Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers and the master cabinetmakers and Edward Treadwell. *Courtesy of the Prints and Photograph Collection, Library of Virginia.*

color). The journeymen attempted to persuade twenty-eight-year-old William Selden to abandon the shop of Hendree.²¹ Failing to convince Selden to leave Hendree's shop the journeymen physically assaulted Selden.²² The indictment identified Selden's attacker as John Brady.²³ A grand jury presentation of August 1832 contained the following notation, which had been crossed out.²⁴

W^r Selden
 Letter
 Refused to submit
 a member J Brady made an assault to
 induce by force
 no difference between them
 it arose solely because he refused to
 conform to the rules of the soc[iet]y
 about the 10th July
 has now every reason to believe he is in
 danger of an attack

By December of 1832 the case against John Brady was dismissed. Brady's security in this case was L.W. Stewart, a Richmond cabinet-maker.²⁵ ²⁶ Stewart's name would come up again, in the 1835 controversy between the Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers of Richmond and Edward L. Treadwell (to be discussed later).

The attack on William Selden seems to have not satisfied the journeymen. On 23 August 1832 they went to the shop of Robert Poore, who employed the two African American artisans.²⁷ The journeymen managed to persuade William Mayo, a journeymen working for Poore, to abandon the shop.²⁸

Information about the Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers of Richmond does not appear again for nearly three years. In the 17 April 1835 issue of the *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, the journeymen cabinetmakers placed a notice in which they questioned the validity of Edward L. Treadwell's advertisement, in which he stated that he sold furniture superior to any Richmond-made goods and at the lowest prices. They also questioned whether Treadwell's furniture was "made by those who were paid New York prices." This comment probably refers to the journeymen's book of prices for New York City. The notice was signed by John H. Allen, chairman of the committee, and six journeymen.²⁹

In Edward Treadwell's response, printed in the same paper the following day, he claimed that the shop masters employing the journeymen were in fact the origin of the notice. Treadwell described that the other master cabinetmakers in Richmond were trying to monopolize the local business and wished to sell inferior goods at high prices.³⁰ Treadwell was quick to state that his remarks were not aimed at Richmond cabinetmakers John Turpin, Robert Poore, and William H. Smith.³¹ Treadwell's specific mention of Turpin, Poore, and Smith was probably intended to gain their support in the disagreement between the Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers and their employers. As to what wages Treadwell paid those who made the furniture he sold, he made it perfectly clear that this was a matter between himself and his employees and no one else.³²

Neither the journeymen nor Treadwell were about to let the matter die and the subsequent war of letters to the newspaper reveals much about the cabinetmaking business in Richmond and nationally. The journeymen's rebuttal appeared in the 7 May 1835 issue of the *Richmond Commercial Complier*. They began by stating that the manner in which Treadwell presented himself and his furniture were far different than the truth. Their response to Treadwell's accusation that they were being used by their employers was stated as follows: "Journeyman Cabinet Makers in Richmond are not negro slaves—America is much too broad, and her sons, we trust far too independent to become tools of any man or employer." Like other artisans of the Republic, they saw themselves as free independent craftsmen who were beholden to no man. The journeymen described their fight with Treadwell as a "never ending quarrel between those who labor and those who would build a fortune by plundering labor of its just reward."

Treadwell had tried to curry favor with the Richmond cabinetmakers Robert Poore and William H. Smith but the Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers took the opportunity to specifically target both master cabinetmakers because they had African Americans working in their shops. The following quote concerning Poore and Smith reveals the economic fears that the Richmond journeymen had concerning African Americans in cabinetmaking shops: ". . . those who would grind the faces of the poor and depreciate a free white man's labor in the north, and they who would place it in competition with that of a negro slave in the south, are well met and well matched."

The Richmond journeymen's article goes on to make some very specific statements about Treadwell and his labor practices. Treadwell had claimed he had two shops in New York that had been destroyed by fire and that he employed a large force of journeymen. The journeymen stated that Treadwell had only a small portion of a building on Fulton Street in New York in which he employed two or three men in varnishing and gilding fancy chairs.³³ Longworth's city directory of New York City for 1834–35 lists Edward L. Treadwell as a chairmaker at Fulton, not as a cabinetmaker.³⁴ ³⁵ The Richmond journeymen

went on to say that Treadwell did not make the furniture he sold but bought some of it at auction and the rest he purchased from a Mr. Needham. Needham was described as one who used machinery and poorly paid workmen to produce second-rate furniture to palm off on Virginians.³⁶ In the eyes of Richmond's journeymen, Treadwell did not operate a traditional cabinetmaking shop. He did not run a shop where he and his journeymen and apprentices produced furniture from start to finish. Rather, Treadwell was an entrepreneur who purchased furniture from a variety of sources in which he had no personal interest.

Treadwell's selling of northern furniture, which was at least partially produced by the use of machines, brings into question the effects of the technological advances of the times. Improved transportation systems and technological advances were advantageous for the shop master who was interested in cutting labor costs and increasing production. On the other hand, for the artisan new technologies meant the loss of a job or reduced wages.³⁷ The journeymen concluded their article by advising the Richmond public to patronize following cabinetmakers: John Turpin, P.G. Cosby, John S. Spence, Littleton W. Stewart, and the firm of Binford & Porter.³⁸ This notice was signed by John H. Allen, chairman along with the names of the six journeymen.³⁹

Edward Treadwell's response to the journeymen appeared in the 8 May issue of the *Richmond Commercial Compiler*. To the charge of buying furniture at auction, he stated he never purchased furniture to the amount of seventy-five dollars at auction. He did admit to purchasing furniture from Mr. Needham but added that it was superior to anything the journeymen could produce. To the charge that the furniture he sold was produced by machinery, he stated "It is all together too late in the day to attempt to stop the march of improvements; and we opine, that those who offer the best goods at the lowest prices, will secure the business, whether they are made by machinery or manual labor."⁴⁰ In other words, sooner or later, one way or the other, the cabinetmaking business would have to deal with the effects

of new technology. The language in Treadwell's response had become extremely acrimonious toward the journeymen, as seen in the following epithets: "infamous band of lying conspirators" and "tools of the lowest and most degraded description, in the hands of unprincipled scoundrels."⁴¹ Treadwell's language apparently hit a raw nerve among the Richmond master cabinetmakers who had been recommended to the public by the Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers. Peter G. Cosby, Littleton W. Stewart, John S. Spence, and Binford & Porter took offense at Treadwell's remarks and filed suits for slander.⁴² Treadwell was sued for \$5000 by each plaintiff.⁴³

Not surprisingly, the journeymen's rebuttal, which appeared in the 11 May 1835 issue of the *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, was a masterpiece of vitriolic rhetoric.⁴⁴ And adding to the fracas between the Treadwell and the journeymen cabinetmakers and their supporters came a letter published in the same issue of the *Richmond Commercial Compiler*. The letter was addressed to the Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers and was signed "A Virginian." The anonymous Virginian recommended that the journeymen's main concern should be the establishment of set prices for making furniture. By this means, employers would have to pay standard wages. The Virginian argued that boycotting shops that employed African American artisans only limited the employment opportunities for the journeymen. Lastly, he admonished the journeymen not to interfere with how master cabinetmakers ran their shops.⁴⁵

In the journeymen's response to the Virginian, which appeared in the 14 May 1835 issue of the *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, they admitted that they did not know who the Virginian was or if he was friend or foe. They responded to the call for set prices by saying, "We have a standard of prices, but on account of some defects in the Book and rapid changes in fashion of Cabinet Ware, it has never been thoroughly voted upon."⁴⁶ It is not clear whether "defects" in a price book or rapidly changing fashions really explained the lack of fixed prices for making furniture. The fact remained that the journeymen did not have total control over their wages. In response to the question of

African American artisans in cabinetmaking shops, the journeymen made the following reply:

they [the journeymen] justly feel indignant at the prospect of their wages being reduced to a *slaves' maintenance* in consequence of their supineness in teaching slaves their craft; and they assure him [the Virginian] that when the farmers in the South dine at the same table with their slaves then we will work in the same shops with them, and not before.—We protest before God and our country against the degradation sought to be inflicted on us, by first teaching slaves in the same shops with freemen, in order hereafter a freeman may work for slavish wages or have no employ."⁴⁷

Of paramount concern to the journeymen was a reduction in their wages or loosing their jobs in shops that utilized African American artisans. The journeymen stated that their protest was not against furniture imported from the North, but against northern furniture produced by workmen who had not been paid a fair wage.⁴⁸ Being paid just wages for work was the real issue that concerned the journeymen cabinetmakers of Richmond.

The "Virginian" had taken the journeymen to task for concerning themselves with how master cabinetmakers handled the running of their shops. The Society of Journeymen Cabinet Maker's 1832 attempt at an organized boycott of shops using African American artisans was labeled a "combination" and viewed as detrimental to the well-being of the community by the Richmond City Hustings Court.⁴⁹ The term "combination" refers to a group or society formed for the purpose of regulating labor practices for others. The journeymen's view of this matter was the exact opposite, as seen in their statement:

Now we assert we have a complete right to do all in our power to promote our own [interests] provided we transgress not the laws. The employers are powerful by means of their capital, and there is no law to restrict or punish combination among them. We seek to oppose an efficient protection between ourselves and them by means of a union for a safeguard, not a combination to injure."⁵⁰

The journeymen were correct in stating that the employers were powerful because they had capital. The journeymen were part of the

non-elite white population, and because they lacked capital they had limited means to push forward their agenda of better wages.⁵¹ ⁵² Frustrated with their economic situation and fearing they would never become self-sufficient, much less masters of their own shops, the journeymen lashed out against the use of African Americans in Richmond's cabinetmaking shops.⁵³

After 1835 nothing more is known about the Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers of Richmond as a group. Following certain key individuals in this struggle does provide some information. In the 28 May 1835 issue of the *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, Edward Treadwell posted a notice that he had intended to close his business on 15 June, but his plans had changed because he was being sued for slander by shop masters Cosby, Stewart, Spence, and the firm of Binford & Porter. Three of the plaintiffs required Treadwell to post bail and appear to answer their charge against him. Treadwell gave bail but stated he would not be forced out of Richmond. He also claimed that he was going to replenish his stock with new furniture.⁵⁴ Despite his claims, Edward Treadwell did not appear on the personal property taxes for the city of Richmond or the surrounding counties of Henrico or Chesterfield for the years 1835–37. This fact indicates that Treadwell was not a permanent resident of Richmond, and in all likelihood he was probably forced out of Richmond by the Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers. Ironically, Treadwell's departure would have also been financially advantageous to the master cabinetmakers who employed African American labor, just as Treadwell asserted in his 18 April 1835 article.

The desired effect of the Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers' boycott on the cabinetmaking shops that employed African American artisans was probably not realized. The 1837 Richmond City personal property tax records show Robert Poore as owning twelve slaves above twelve years of age.⁵⁵ The large number of slaves over twelve would indicate that some of the individuals worked in his shop.⁵⁶ Poore continued to operate his shop in Richmond until 1840.⁵⁷ He died the following year.⁵⁸

William H. Smith was also disliked by the journeymen because

he used African American artisans. In the 1837 personal property tax Smith was taxed with one slave over twelve years of age.⁵⁹ Because it is not known whether the African American artisans in Smith's shop were slaves he owned, slaves he rented, or free persons of color he paid, it can not be assumed that his one slave over twelve worked in his shop. Smith was one of a handful of cabinetmakers still working in Richmond in the city's 1845 industrial directory.⁶⁰ The Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers did not put Poore or Smith out of business and both men certainly continued to use African Americans in their shops if it was to their advantage.

The success of the Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers of Richmond in becoming masters of their own shops is difficult to determine. Of the journeymen identified as society members, only John A. Belvin is mentioned in Richmond's 1845 industrial directory.⁶¹ Belvin and John H. Allen, chairman of the committee for the society, had formed their own shop by 1837.⁶² In the 1850 census Belvin had ten cabinetmakers aged seventeen to fifty nine in his household.⁶³ By 1850, Allen was living in Wythe County in southwest Virginia.⁶⁴ Allen may have relocated to the interior of the state hoping to escape competition from northern goods and the shops in urban centers such as Richmond. Henry Cook, also a member of the society, is probably the individual listed as Henry J. Cook, native of New Jersey, in the household of master cabinetmaker John J. Binford.⁶⁵ Cook and many journeymen like him probably never were able to have their own shops.

The 1825 masthead on the bill of Richmond silversmith, William Cowan, shows the American eagle grasping a banner with the words "Arts Protected" (*Figure 5*).⁶⁶ In 1825 a journeyman cabinetmaker seeing Cowan's bill may have felt that the statement also protected his own ambition and that in time through hard work and industry he would become self sufficient and possibly master of his own shop. With the establishment of the Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers in 1832, Richmond's journeymen were beginning to have second thoughts about who was included in the proclamation "The Arts Protected." By the time of their 1835 controversy with Treadwell, the jour-



FIGURE 5. Eagle with a banner from a voucher from William Cowan, a Richmond watch and clockmaker, 1824. *Courtesy of The Library of Virginia, Auditor of Public Accounts, Entry 692, Folder 1, Vouchers 1824, No. 19.*

neymen felt themselves in a more threatened situation. Despite the efforts of the Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers to protect their interests, Richmond's exposure to a national and global economy, advances in technology and transportation, and changes in the local labor force modified and ultimately dissolved the traditional cabinet-making shop in which the journeymen worked. While Richmond was the most industrial southern city in the antebellum period, the same issues would eventually impact other cities throughout the South, with similar results.⁶⁷

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NOTES

1. *Richmond Constitutional Whig* (semiweekly), 29 May 1832, 3-6. The announcement was published three more times in the same paper: 5 June 1832, 3-6; 15 June 1832, 3-5; and 26 June 1832, 3-5.

2. Howard B. Rock, "All Her Sons Join as One Social Band": New York City's Artisanal Societies in the Early Republic" in *American Artisans & Crafting Social Identity, 1750-1850* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 179.
3. Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic, New York City & the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 31-32, 115.
4. Paul A. Gilje, "Identity and Independence: The American Artisan, 1750-1850" in *American Artisans & Crafting Social Identity, 1750-1850* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), xiv.
5. In the nineteenth century, conflict between journeymen cabinetmakers associations and master cabinetmakers occurred in 1829 in Philadelphia, Washington, DC, and Baltimore: Kathleen M. Catalano, "Cabinetmaking in Philadelphia 1820-1840: Transition from Craft to Industry," *Winterthur Portfolio* 13 (1979): 87-89; Wendell Garrett, "The price book of the District of Columbia cabinetmakers, 1831," *The Magazine ANTIQUES*, May 1975: 888-889; William R. Sutton, *Journemen For Jesus: Evangelical Artisans Confront Capitalism in Jacksonian Baltimore* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988), 310-311).
6. Rock, 173.
7. Patricia A. Schecter, "Free Slave Labor in the Old South: The Tredegar Ironworkers' Strike of 1847," *Labor History*, vol. 35, no. 2 (Spring 1994): 171-172, 176, 179, 183.
8. James Sidbury, "Slave Artisans in Richmond, Virginia, 1780-1810" in *American Artisans & Crafting Social Identity, 1750-1850* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 48-53.
9. In 1847 similar complaints were lodged by white ironworkers striking at the Tredegar Iron Works. The ironworkers demanded higher wages and refused to work with African Americans in certain areas of iron production out of a fear that they would lose their jobs to enslaved labor. Schecter, "Free Slave Labor in the Old South," passim.
10. Sidbury, 48-53.
11. J. Riddick Jr. to Willis Cowling, 1 January 1818, Richmond City Court Records, Willis Cowling Papers (hereafter cited as CP), Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia (hereafter cited as LVA).
12. J. Christian Kolbe, "Willis Cowling (1788-1828): Richmond Cabinetmaker," *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts*, vol. xxvii, no.2 (Winter 2001): passim.
13. Richmond City, Hustings Court, Deed Book 23, 1824-1825, 340.
14. Sidbury, 53-54.
15. Kolbe, "Willis Cowling . . .," 69-73.
16. The establishment of agreed upon wages for journeywork was a primary goal for journeymen cabinetmaker societies. This was accomplished by compiling a book of prices that stated specific wages for the production of specific furniture forms. An example is the 1831 District of Columbia Price Book. Garrett, 888-889.
17. Wilentz, 94-95.
18. They were Edmund Leneve, William Charters, Solomon Malbern, William S. Tyree, Thomas Gray, Henry Cook, Josiah Poore, John Worthen, William Hatchell, Archibald Diddle, John Reynolds, Edwin Wyatt, Alfred Yarrington, William Bobitt, Alexander Schaeffer, David Johnson, and George Marston.
19. Richmond City, Hustings Court, Ended Causes, September 1832, Indictment against Edmund Leneve and others, LVA.
20. Robert Poore and George Hendree were older men who were established Richmond cabinetmakers. Hendree died in 1834 at age 43 (Virginia Genealogical Society, *Death Notices from Richmond, Virginia Newspapers 1821-1840* [Richmond: Virginia Genealogical Society, 1987], 141). A biographical sketch for Hendree is found in Ronald L. Hurst, "Cabinetmakers and Re-

lated Trades in Norfolk, Virginia, 1700–1820” (MA thesis, College of William and Mary, 1989), 109–112. George Poore died in 1841 at age 66 (Wesley E. Pippenger, comp., *Death Notices from Richmond, Virginia Newspapers, 1841–1853* [Richmond: Virginia Genealogical Society, 2002], 32). For more about Robert Poore, see Kolbe, “Willis Cowling . . .,” 51–75.

21. William Selden is listed in the 1850 Henrico County, Virginia, census as a cabinetmaker aged 46, 1850 Census of Henrico County Virginia, 254.

22. Richmond City, Hustings Court, Ended Causes, September 1832, Indictment against Edmund Leneve and others, LVA.

23. Richmond City, Hustings Court, Ended Causes, November 1832, Indictment against John Brady, LVA.

24. Richmond City, Hustings Court, Ended Causes, August 1832, jury representation[?] combination journeymen cabinetmakers, LVA.

25. Richmond City, Hustings Court, Ended Causes, December 1832, Commonwealth vs. John Brady, LVA.

26. *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, ~ May 1835, 3-2. Richmond City, Hustings Court, Will Book 8, 1838–1841, 221–230.

27. They were Isaac, a free person of color, and Joe, a slave belonging to Poore.

28. Richmond City, Hustings Court, Ended Causes, September 1832, Indictment against Edmund Leneave and others, LVA.

29. The six names were: Jos. F.C. Barron, Jno. A. Belvin, Wm. Pew, John Hardison, Edward Martin, and Christopher Hudson. *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, 17 April 1835, 3-2.

30. *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, 18 April 1835, 3-2.

31. *Richmond City Directory 1845* (Richmond: H. K. Ellyson, 1845), 24 (hereafter cited as RCD).

32. *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, 18 April 1835, 3-2.

33. *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, ~ May 1835, 3-2.

34. *New York City Directory 1834–1835* (New York: Thomas Longworth, 1834), 681 (hereafter cited as NYCD).

35. In 1835 Treadwell sold four sewing chairs to the state of Virginia for use in the Governor’s mansion. J. Christian Kolbe, “Decorative Arts Guide to the Records of the Auditor of Public Accounts in the Library of Virginia,” *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts*, vol. xxix, no. 1 (Winter 2003): 89.

36. Longworth’s directory for 1835–36 lists John Needham as a chairmaker and Thomas Needham as a chairmaker. The 1850 census for Westchester County, New York, does list a Thomas Needham, aged 45, as a cabinetmaker. NYCD, 514; 1850 Census of Westchester County, New York, 250.

37. Sutton, 34–37.

38. *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, 14 April 1835, 3-1; 16 April 1835, 3-5; and ~ May 1835, 3-2.

39. The six journeymen were John Hardison, Wm. Peed, Henry Cook, John T. Wilkes, J. A. Belvin, and Edwd. Martin. *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, ~ May 1835, 3-2.

40. *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, 8 May 1835, 3-2.

41. *Ibid.*

42. Richmond City, Hustings Court, Ended Causes, June 1837, Cosby vs. Treadwell, LVA; Richmond City, Hustings Court, Ended Causes, August 1837, Stewart vs. Treadwell, LVA; Richmond City, Hustings Court, Ended Causes, August 1836, Spence vs. Treadwell, LVA; and Richmond City, Hustings Court, Ended Causes, June 1837, Binford & Porter vs. Treadwell, LVA.

43. *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, 28 May 1835, 3-1.

44. An example of the journeymen’s rhetoric follows: “And now we leave the field open to Mr Treadwell, let him rave and storm, and if the employers like it, let him sprinkle them again.

For ourselves he may exhaust his vocabulary of Blackguardism. We answer not. The public are in possession of all the facts of the case, and by their decision we wish to stand or fall. If Mr. Treadwell thinks proper to give us another specimen of his tantums in the Compiler, let him, if it will relieve the bile which appears to have accumulated on his stomach, he is welcome." *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, 11 May 1835.

45. *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, 11 May 1835, 3-2.

46. *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, 14 May 1835, 3-1.

47. *Ibid.*

48. *Ibid.*

49. Richmond City, Hustings Court. Ended Cases, August 1832, jury representation (?) combination journeymen cabinetmakers and Ended Causes, September 1832, Indictment against Edmund Leneve and others, LVA.

50. *Ibid.*

51. Ronald D. Green, "Urban Industry, Black Resistance, and Racial Restriction in the Antebellum South: A Feneral Model and a Case Study in Urban Virginia," (PhD dissertation, American University, 1980), 559-560.

52. Rock, 173.

53. Green, 560, 571, 575-576.

54. *Richmond Commercial Compiler*, 28 May 1835, 3-1.

55. Auditor of Public Accounts, Personal Property Tax, Richmond City, 1837, 27, LVA.

56. One of the twelve was probably the slave Joe recorded as working in Poore's shop in 1832, see endnote 26.

57. Kolbe, "Decorative Arts Guide . . .," 89.

58. Poore died in 1841 at age sixty-six, Pippenger, 32.

59. Auditor of Public Accounts, Personal Property Tax, Richmond City, 1837, 32, LVA.

60. *RCD*, 1845, 24.

61. *Ibid.*

62. Richmond City, Hustings Court. Ended Causes, September 1837, Bevin & Allen vs. Pegram, LVA.

63. 1850 Census of Henrico County, Virginia, 369.

64. 1850 Census of Wythe County, Virginia, 229.

65. 1850 Census of Henrico County, Virginia, 368.

66. Auditor of Public Accounts, Entry 692, Folder 1, Vouchers 1824, No.19, LVA.

67. Sidbury, 49.

Silver and Gold

A Pair of Officer's Swords Marked by Thomas and Andrew Ellicott Warner of Baltimore¹

GARY ALBERT

INTRODUCTION

TWO REMARKABLY SIMILAR eagle-pommel officer's swords, both struck with the mark of brothers Thomas and Andrew Ellicott Warner, working in partnership from 1805 to 1813 in Baltimore, embody some difficult-to-answer questions about the role of silversmiths in the manufacture and retail of silver-mounted officer's swords in the early American Republic (*Figures 1 and 2*).² Chief among the questions raised by the swords is whether they were produced by the Warners in Baltimore or if they were purchased as complete swords from elsewhere and retailed by the brothers to their customers. Attempting to determine the origins of the Warner swords is the genesis and focus of this article.

The presence of the Warner brothers' marks on the swords (*Figures 3 and 4*) does not prove that the weapons were made in their shop. Many early-nineteenth-century American silversmiths marked imported products as their own and then retailed the wares to local customers.³ In fact, most early American officer's swords of quality were imported from England or the Continent.⁴ If the Warner swords were made in America, they are significant artifacts capable of imparting a

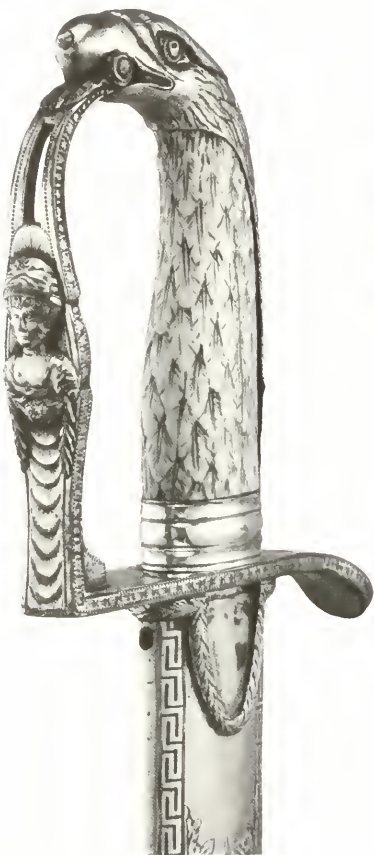


FIGURE 1. Officer's sword marked by Thomas and Andrew Ellicott Warner; Baltimore, MD (imported French blade); 1805–12. Silver, bronze, ivory, and steel; HOA 6", LOA 39½", DOA 1". *MNSA Acq. 3127*.

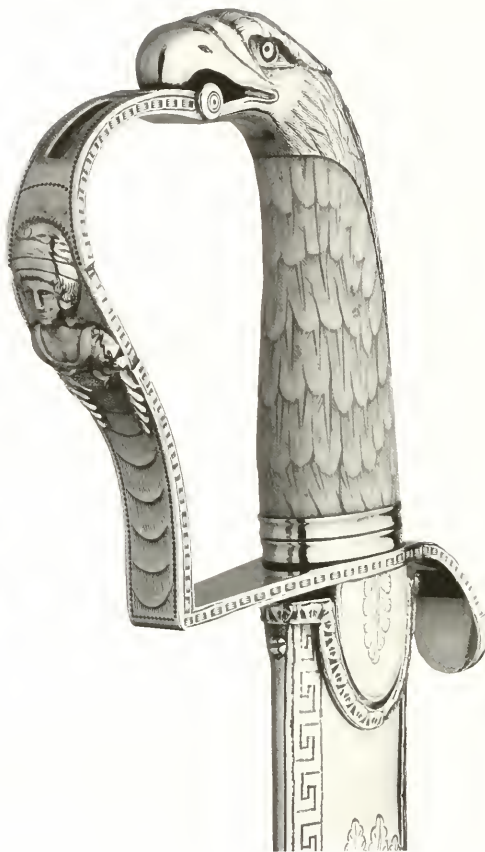


FIGURE 2. Officer's sword marked by Thomas and Andrew Ellicott Warner; Baltimore, MD (imported French blade); 1805–12. Silver, ivory, and steel; LOA 39". *Collection of Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1973.481. Photograph courtesy of Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (hereafter MEA Boston).*

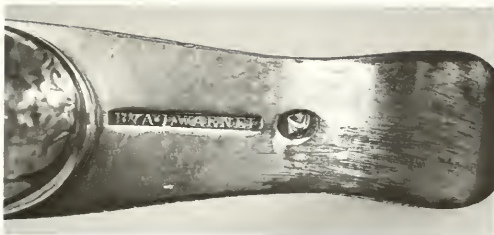


FIGURE 3. Detail of mark on MESDA's Warner sword.

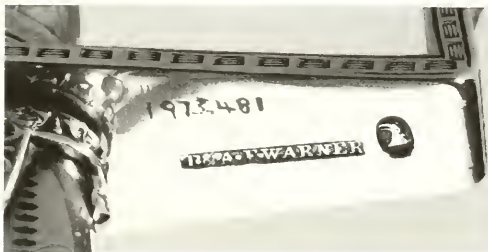


FIGURE 4. Detail of mark on MFA Boston's Warner sword.
Photograph courtesy of MFA Boston.

deeper understanding of how silver-mounted swords were produced, attained, and purveyed to the officers of America's army and militias during the Federal period.

Three possibilities for the manufacture of the Warner swords must be considered: The first is that all the elements of the swords—including the blades—were made by the brothers in their shop or through a combination of contracts with local specialized artisans such as blacksmiths and gilders. The second possibility is that the Warners purchased complete swords—either made in the domestic market or imported—punched their mark into the hilts, and then retailed them to their customers. The third scenario is that the Warners acquired the blades from an overseas supplier or domestically and produced the hilts themselves (or “mounted” the swords, to use the period term) (*Figures 5 and 6*).



FIGURE 5. Overall view (reverse) of MESDA's Warner sword with scabbard.



FIGURE 6. Overall view of MEA Boston's Warner sword in scabbard.

Photograph courtesy of MEA Boston.

THOMAS AND ANDREW ELICOTT WARNER, SILVERSMITHS OF BALTIMORE

The Warner family of silversmiths began working in Baltimore in 1799 and continued in the trade for nearly a hundred years. The founder of the Warner family in Baltimore was Cuthbert Warner (b. 1758–d. 1838), originally from Pennsylvania.⁵

In the last years of the eighteenth century, Cuthbert Warner moved his family to Harford County, Maryland. By 1799 he must have moved his family to Baltimore because he was listed in that city's directories

as a watch and clockmaker at 3 Jones Street (now Front Street) from 1799–1804. From 1807–12 his residence was listed as 113 Green Street and his shop was listed at the same address. He was primarily a clockmaker but also provided the traditional services of a silversmith.⁶

Cuthbert and his second wife, Ann Smith (*Figures 7 and 8*), had nine children, of which three sons became silversmiths: Thomas (b. 1780–d. 1828); Andrew Ellicott (b. 1786–d. 1870); and John (b. 1795–d. ca. 1846). The Warner family's tradition of silversmithing continued through its third generation by Thomas's eldest son, Joseph (b. 1811–d. 1862), and Andrew's son, Andrew Ellicott Warner Jr. (b. 1813–d. 1896).⁷

Thomas Warner was listed in the 1803 Baltimore directory as a silversmith. He worked on his own until 1805 when he partnered with his brother Andrew Ellicott. The brothers worked together until Thomas joined the military to fight in the War of 1812.⁸ On 8 September 1812, three months after America declared war on Great Britain, Thomas



FIGURE 7. Cuthbert Warner (1753–1822) by an unidentified artist; Maryland; 1790–1822. Oil on mahogany panel; HOA 11⁷/₈" , WOA 9³/₈". Private collection, MESDA research file (hereafter MRF) S-109~5.

FIGURE 8. Mrs. Cuthbert Warner (nee Anne Smith) by an unidentified artist; Maryland; 1790–1822. Oil on mahogany panel; HOA 11³/₄", WOA 9¹/₂". *Private collection, MRE S-100-6.*



joined Captain Stephen Moore's U.S. Volunteers of Baltimore, a company of citizen soldiers recruited to serve one year in the United States Army. He was commissioned to the rank of ensign.⁹

Thomas Warner participated in combat operations during the Great Lakes campaign. On 19 April 1813, he wrote to his wife from Sackett's Harbor (New York) that his company, along with the Albany Greens, had been attached to General Zebulon Pike's brigade.¹⁰ Perhaps breaching confidentiality of military planning, Thomas told Mary that his brigade was "to embark abroad of the fleet for some secret expedition."¹¹ This "secret expedition" would become the Battle of York (a fort that would later become the city of Toronto), fought on 27 April. The American forces prevailed at York, and on 29 April Thomas wrote to Mary: "It is with sincere satisfaction that I inform you of my being well after a pretty severe engagement."¹²

While it seems that Thomas Warner survived the Battle of York unscathed, at some point he suffered an injury that caused him to lose his left leg. He was honorably discharged from the army on 7 Septem-

ber 1813 and had returned to Baltimore by November.¹³ Advertising in the *Baltimore American* of 25 November 1813, Thomas stated that he had returned to his trade. Although he was disabled, he served as a captain in 39th regiment of the Maryland Militia and aided in the defense of Fort McHenry and North Point in 1814.¹⁴

In 1814 Thomas Warner became Baltimore's first city assayer under the Silver Purity Act. Baltimore was the only American city to establish an assayer's office to ensure the purity of the silver sold by local smiths. The assay office would continue operation in some form until 1860.¹⁵ The Baltimore assay office is the nearest any early American community came to creating a guild system similar to those found in Britain and Europe. As city assayer, Thomas was prohibited from making or selling silver and made his living by watchmaking and collecting a fee of five cents for every ounce of silver he assayed.¹⁶

Thomas married Mary Ann Meigs in 1810 and they had three children together. He declared bankruptcy in 1820 and died on 22 May 1828; he is buried in Greenmount Cemetery, Baltimore.¹⁷

Thomas's brother and one-time partner, Andrew Ellicott Warner, became one of Baltimore's most celebrated silversmiths. Andrew Ellicott was one of the few Baltimore silversmiths who provided competition for Samuel Kirk during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Andrew Ellicott and Samuel Kirk each created their own interpretations of the repousse-style silverwork that defined Baltimore silver during most of the nineteenth century and the two shops dominated the market.¹⁸

On 25 June 1812 Andrew Ellicott married Dorothy Litsinger of Baltimore (*Figures 9 and 10*). They had at least five children together. After announcing the dissolution of his partnership with Thomas in 1813, Andrew Ellicott kept the workshop at 5 Gay Street that he had shared with his brother (*Figure 11*).¹⁹ He served with Thomas as a captain in the 39th Regiment of the Maryland Militia and took part in the Battle of North Point. After the war he worked from the Gay Street shop until his death in 1870 at the age of eighty-three. He is also buried in Baltimore's Greenmount Cemetery.²⁰

FIGURE 9. Andrew Ellicott Warner (1786–1870) attributed to Bass Otis; Maryland; ca. 1812. Oil on canvas; HOA 28³/₄", WOA 28³/₄". *Private collection, MRF S-10973.*



FIGURE 10. Mrs. Andrew Ellicott Warner (nee Dorothy Litzinger) attributed to Bass Otis; Maryland; ca. 1812. Oil on canvas; HOA 28³/₄", WOA 28³/₄". *Private collection, MRF S-10974.*





FIGURE 11. Inset detail of the City of Baltimore from *A Map of Maryland* published by Fielding Lucas Jr. (engraved by Joseph Cone and William H. Freeman); Baltimore, MD; 1823. Ink on paper; HOA 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", WOA 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", *MESDA Acc.* 3348.

EAGLE-POMMEL SWORDS OF THE FEDERAL PERIOD

The undercurrent of imminent war with Britain may not yet have been palpable when Thomas Warner and his younger brother Andrew Ellicott Warner entered into their Baltimore silversmithing partnership in 1805. Baltimore was a flourishing port city and the two young men—Thomas was twenty-five years old, Andrew only nineteen—must have been full of optimism as they began their venture.²¹ Within two years, however, the United States was desperately trying to maintain its neutrality as the war between Britain and Napoleonic France began impinging on American trade and endangering the sailing vessels that sustained Baltimore's growth explosion.

The business decision by Thomas and Andrew Ellicott Warner to

offer officer's swords to their clientele was a sound one due to the establishment of numerous local militia units and an enlargement of the United States Army in anticipation of the approaching war with Britain. The Warners knew that swords would be in demand because every newly commissioned officer in Baltimore and the surrounding region—and throughout America—would need to purchase a sword as part of their uniform.²² Militia and army officers were expected to purchase their own uniforms and weapons, an arrangement with a long tradition.

The eighteenth-century militia laws of the English colonies in North America required individual militia soldiers (both officers and enlisted men) to provide themselves with a musket and either a bayonet or cutting sword. In the post-Revolution period enlisted soldiers in the United States Army were provided with swords that were manufactured under contract by the Federal government; and by the early-nineteenth century, state militias were also supplying their enlisted soldiers with contract-made swords. But government contracts to manufacture high-quality officers' swords were not pursued until the 1840s.²³ Officers in the early-nineteenth century were still required to purchase their swords individually. The Warner brothers understood the market and were ready to meet the need—at a cost to the officers, of course.

The presence of eagle heads on the pommels of the Warner officer's swords is one both in keeping with the classical fashion of their day and one steeped in the tradition of Western culture (*see Figures 1 and 2*). This combination of fashion and tradition made eagle-pommel swords very popular among American officers during the first four decades of the nineteenth century.²⁴ While it is tempting to label all eagle-pommel swords from the Federal period as "American," the majority of surviving examples were made in the shops of British and Continental cutlers and very few can be attributed to American craftsmen.²⁵

Eagles used as decorative motifs can be found on objects created by the ancient Assyrians, Egyptians, and Greeks. Civilizations throughout the Near East and Western worlds adorned a myriad of prod-



FIGURE 12. 1782 sketch of the Great Seal of the United States by Charles Thomson and William Barton.

Google Images.

ucts with the noble bird—from military equipment and civic devices to domestic items and purely decorative possessions. Romans legions conquered an empire behind standards emblazoned with an eagle.²⁶ Two thousand years later, the eagle supplanted colonial representations of America, such as the American Indian maiden, because of its decorative versatility and for its capacity to distance the new nation's identity from its colonial past.²⁷ Soaring to new heights of popularity during the Federal period, the eagle as decoration appeared as ornamentation or sculpture for every type of object used by Americans. Decorative eagles—both bald and crested—adorned goods made in this country as well as products manufactured abroad designed specifically for the American market.²⁸

The eagle's rise in popularity as an American icon began with Congress's approval in 1782 of a design for the Great Seal of the United States, created jointly by Charles Thomson and William Barton (*Figure 12*).²⁹ Their design placed a crested eagle firmly at the center of

the Seal.³⁰ With arrows grasped in one talon and an olive branch in the other, the eagle on the Great Seal made a statement that was both peaceful and aggressive. When the quasi-conflict with France in the 1790s and rising tensions with Britain in the early-nineteenth century required the United States to assume a hawkish stance on the world stage, what better representation of the young republic's nascent strength could there be than the hawk's larger and more powerful cousin, the eagle?

THE INTERNATIONAL SWORD-MAKING INDUSTRY

There were a multitude of possible conduits through which American craftsmen and merchants procured suitable swords for army and militia officers during the Federal period. This complex network makes identifying exactly how a specific weapon arrived at an officer's side nearly impossible to determine without a receipt or other articles of documentation.

The blade is the essence of every sword. Although there were a few sword blade manufacturers in America during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, if an American silversmith required a first-rate blade, it would have most likely been imported either from Germany, France, or England.³¹ To confuse matters, a German-made blade may have been imported from an agent in London or the same blade may have come from a Parisian cutler. Other European countries such as Spain and Italy certainly made blades, many of exceptional quality, but Mediterranean manufacturers did not play a significant role in the American market of the early-nineteenth century.³²

From the Middle Ages onward the center of iron working in the Western World has been located in regions that today exist within Germany near its borders with Belgium and the Netherlands.³³ Chief among the German metal working towns is Solingen, which by the 1400s had established itself as the fine cutlery and sword-making center for Western Europe.³⁴ Solingen's reputation for outstanding crafts-

manship spread throughout Europe and by the eighteenth century dominated the traffic of blades for both weapons and domestic use.³⁵

The French were consistent importers of Solingen blades, even after the 1730s when France established its own blade-making center in Klingenthal.³⁶ The craftsmen in Klingenthal could not replicate the high-quality steel of Solingen. Centuries of metalworking skills in Solingen had been passed from father to son, master to apprentice. The metalworking guilds of Solingen closely guarded their secrets and actively prevented recruitment of skilled craftsman by foreign powers through harsh and vindictive reprisals on the families of any craftsman enticed to practice his trade elsewhere.³⁷ In Klingenthal, this lack of skilled workmen prevented its blades from rivaling Solingen products, with the exception of a period from the 1780s through the 1820s when Klingenthal factories were able to co-opt Solingen craftsmen and produced sword blades that not only matched the strength of German blades but surpassed the Teutonic product in terms of decorative achievement.³⁸

Across the channel from the Continent, England shared France's problem of establishing a reliable source of strong blades. During the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, the British army and navy relied nearly completely on imported German-made blades for swords of any quality. The city of Birmingham did produce munition-grade sword blades, but not to the standards of Solingen. In the nineteenth century, Sheffield became an important manufacturing center for steel scientific and surgical equipment, but that city's industry did not produce sword blades.³⁹

The production of high-quality blades is only the first step toward making complete officer's swords such as the ones marked by the Warners of Baltimore. Coordinating the multiple steps of mounting a sword was the responsibility of one person or shop, known as a sword cutler. The individual trades that performed the various services required would have been housed in several shops.⁴⁰ The most talented and successful sword cutlers during the early-nineteenth century were found in England (London and Birmingham) and France (Paris).⁴¹



FIGURE 13. Detail of hilt and decorated blade of MESDA's Warner sword.



FIGURE 14. Detail of hilt and decorated blade (reverse) of MESDA's Warner sword.



FIGURE 15. Detail of fire-gilt decoration on reverse of the blade on MESDA's Warner sword.



FIGURE 16. Detail of the fire-gilt decoration on the blade of MFA Boston's Warner sword. *Photograph by the author.*

The sword blade may have arrived at the cutler already decorated or it may have been decorated after it was received. Blued and gilded decorations of blades, as seen on the Warner swords, were fashionable for high-end swords of the early-nineteenth century (*Figures 13 and 14*).⁴² Sword blades decorated in Germany, France, and England were often decorated specifically for export to the United States and featured eagles, stars, and other patriotic American motifs (*Figures 15 and 16*).⁴³

Once the sword cutler had a decorated blade, they would have it mounted on a hilt. If precious metals were used for the hilt, the talents of a gold or silversmith were procured. Specialized craftsmen were then employed to make the grips from bone or ivory and wire. Once the complete sword was assembled, the cutler would be responsible for its export to the appropriate market.⁴⁴ In addition to complete swords, cutlers also exported unmounted sword blades for mounting by American craftsmen. While American-mounted officer's swords from the early-nineteenth century do exist, they are the exception rather than the rule.⁴⁵

The relatively few officer's swords with blades manufactured in America during the first two decades of the nineteenth century were most likely the products of Philadelphia-area craftsmen such as Lewis Prah, the Rose family, David Henkels, or Winner, Nippes and Steinman or the Connecticut blade maker Nathan Starr.⁴⁶ All of those

manufacturers were capable of producing sword blades for enlisted soldiers and sailors and were contracted by state governments and the army and navy for large quantities of basic edged weapons. Some cutlers, such as Rose in Philadelphia and Starr in Connecticut, also produced highly decorated blades for presentation swords.⁴⁷ Among the most notable were blades mounted by the Philadelphia silversmiths Fletcher & Gardiner in the 1820s and 30s.⁴⁸ Despite the output of manufacturers such as Rose and Starr, in general the United States during the Federal period did not have an appreciable source of blades for officer's swords—at least not blades that featured the excellence of workmanship and level of decoration appropriate for the ostentatious style of the period.⁴⁹

When the complexity of the sword-cutlery industry is considered, the number of surviving early-nineteenth-century officer's swords crafted completely in Europe or Britain overwhelm those that were either mounted by an American silversmith or feature both a domestic blade and hilt. The dominance of the Continental and British sword-cutlery industries makes it likely that the Warner brothers imported complete swords from abroad to retail in their Baltimore shop.

AMERICAN SILVERSMITHS ADVERTISEMENTS FOR SWORDS, 1800–1820

As the above discussion has established, the sword-cutlery environment in which the Warner brothers engaged was intricate and far-reaching. Advertisements placed by contemporaries of the Warners provide further context for the sale of officer's swords in America during the 1800 to 1820 period. Of particular interest to answer the question of the origins of the Warner swords is the frequency in which complete officer's swords and unmounted sword blades were imported to the American market or purchased domestically.

A review of advertisements from 1800 to 1820 reveals that some businessmen who were merchants, not craftsmen, advertised that they

sold swords; however, the majority of advertisements for swords were placed by silversmiths.⁵⁰ Early-nineteenth-century army or militia officers knew to seek out a silversmith's shop to satisfy the need for a sword to complete their uniform.

Of the 231 Baltimore-area silversmiths identified by MESDA's *Craftsman Database* that were active during this 1800–20 period, only ten (just under 4 percent) stated that they sold swords and/or that they mounted sword blades.⁵¹ Unfortunately, Thomas and Andrew Elliott Warner were not among them.⁵² In fact, it seems that the brothers didn't advertise their shop at all during the life of their partnership except to announce its creation and demise.

Looking beyond the Baltimore region, MESDA has identified 626 silversmiths throughout the South who were active between 1800 and 1820. Of these 626 craftsmen, exactly one hundred advertised that they sold swords (16 percent). The reason why a significantly greater percentage of silversmiths outside of Baltimore (16 percent across the South versus 4 percent in the Baltimore area) advertised swords during the period has not been explained and could be a topic for further study.

In the Baltimore area, the swords in the ten identified silversmiths' advertisements were described in a wide variety of ways, including "Navy Hangers," "military swords," "Nelson Durks," and "Artillery Swords."⁵³ Less descriptive or non-military-specific terms for blade weapons also appeared, such as "Silver mounted Swords and Dirks," "Silver, gilt and brass mounted Swords," "Horsemen's Swords," and "foils."⁵⁴ All told, five of the ten identified silversmiths advertised that they imported goods for sale in their shop.⁵⁵ The silversmiths with greatest variety of merchandise and most frequent advertisers were George Aiken, Gelston & Gould, and George W. Riggs.

On the surface it would seem that Aiken, Gelston & Gould, and Riggs were clearly merchants that imported nearly all of their products and were not doing much benchwork. On more than one occasion Aiken and Gelston & Gould announced that they had "just received" the "latest LONDON & PARISIAN FASHIONS" by the "last vessels from

London and Liverpool.”⁵⁶ But the need to quickly sell imported wares often skews advertisements placed by silversmiths promoting imported goods and can misrepresent the activities in their shops. All three of these silversmith shops likely continued to make, engrave, clean, and repair silver in their shops.⁵⁷

Aiken, Gelston & Gould, and Riggs also advertised a menagerie of related military items such as “Gold and Silver Epaulets,” “Sword Knots and Sashes,” “Navy Buttons,” and “lace, epaulets, cord, &c. &c.”⁵⁸ These silversmiths were selling nearly every related military goods that an officer would need to complete his uniform. Indeed, the firm of Gelston & Gould categorized their military wares in an advertisement from 1818: “Military—Muskets; Swords; Dirks; Pistols; Epaulets; Sashes; Belts; Spurs; Lace; Belt Mountings; and other Ornaments.”⁵⁹ And two years later they were even more explicit in their ability to fully outfit not only a single military officer but an entire unit: “IN THE MILITARY LINE. Every article for officers of all grades in the army or navy, viz: Swords, Dirks, Spaulets, Plumes, Sashes, Laces, Cords and Ornaments of all kinds—companies equipped at the shortest notice.”⁶⁰

The five identified Baltimore-area silversmiths who did not advertise that they imported goods prove to be quite an enlightening group in the attempt to determine if Thomas and Andrew Ellicott Warner mounted their swords or imported them complete from a cutler. Charles L. Boehme, Barden Burrow, Randall H. Cashell, Littleton Holland, and John Lynch did not advertise expansive inventories of imported goods. Their advertisements notified potential customers that Baltimore-area craftsmen possessed all of the specialized skills necessary to not only mount swords but also to decorate blades.

Lynch advertised in 1808 that he “HAS on hand for sale, a quantity of Sword Blades, suitable for Infantry, Artillery, and Calvary, which will be mounted to suit the purchasers.”⁶¹ A year earlier Holland also advertised that he mounted sword blades and specified “Silver mounted Swords, Blades of the first quality, and Mounting executed in a superior style. . . .”⁶² That same year Boehme placed a notice stating

that he “mounts Swords, in Silver, Brass and Gilt, of the Newest Patterns [*sic*].”⁶³

The two silversmiths remaining from the group, Burrow and Cashell, specialized in decorating sword blades. In 1814 Cashell informed potential customers that in addition to cleaning and repairing firearms his services included “swords cleaned, polished, new mounted, gilt, or plated, —blades blued equal to the imported.”⁶⁴ Four years later, Burrow advertised “Ornamenting, Fire Gilding and Jewelling . . . he ornaments Combs, gilds Sword Handles and Scabbards, or any thing else in the line”⁶⁵

The dominant Continental and British sword-cutlery industries provided complete swords for half of the Baltimore-area silversmiths who advertised that they sold edged weapons from 1800 to 1820. The existence of silversmiths with the knowledge and skills of Boehme, Burrow, Cashell, Holland, and Lynch—as well as the domestic sword blade manufacturers in Philadelphia and Connecticut—provides evidence that Thomas and Andrew Ellicott Warner could have purchased high-quality sword blades from abroad or domestically and mounted them for customers. If advertisements placed by their contemporaries are taken at face value, the odds that the Warners mounted their swords in Baltimore are fifty-fifty.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE MESDA AND MFA WARNER SWORDS

Regardless of whether or not the Warner brothers mounted their swords themselves, it is nearly certain that they purchased the blades for their swords. The relatively meager capacity of American blade makers during the Federal period to produce high-quality blades for officer's sword makes it likely that they purchased blades from abroad. At the time that MESDA acquired its Warner sword in 1980, it was cataloged as a presentation saber made between 1805 and 1812 with a blade of French manufacture. Labeling the sword as a presentation weapon

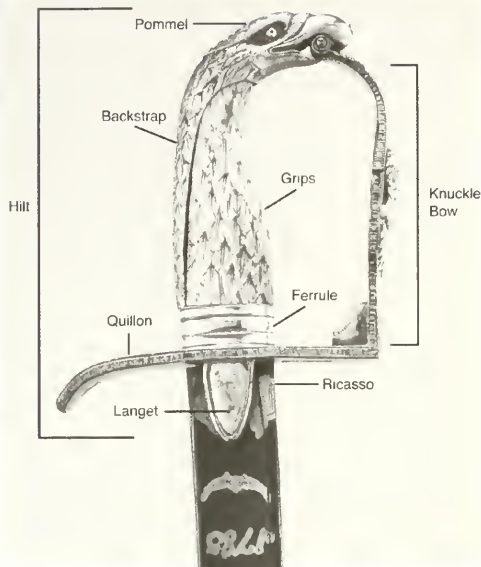


FIGURE 17. Elements of a sword hilt (detail of MESDA's Warner sword).

was not accurate, but evaluation of the blade on MESDA's Warner sword does support an attribution of French origin.

The exceptional weight and length of the blade are characteristic of the superb sword blades being produced by the French in the first decade of the nineteenth century.⁶⁶ More revealing, the lettering and application of the fire-gilt blade decorations also point to Continental manufacture.⁶⁷ And the metal scabbard reflects the influential Parisian military fashion during the apex of Napoleon's power.⁶⁸ No manufacturer's mark has been found on the blade, either on the ricasso or the tang (the part of the blade that extends through the grips and is affixed to the pommel), which are common areas for such marks (*see Figure 17*).⁶⁹

While the MFA's Warner sword has not been disassembled to examine the blade for a manufacture's mark on its tang, there is no such mark on the ricasso. The blades on both Warner swords are identical in dimension and shape, but the decorations are slightly different, as are the decorations on the scabbards. Despite these differences, the blade on the MFA sword is also most likely of French manufacture for the same reasons given for MESDA's sword blade.

Both blades feature patriotic motifs that were specifically intended for the American market. Eagles with sixteen stars under a banner that reads "E Pluribus Unum" and the date "1783" below (*see Figure 15*) appear on both blades. The date most likely refers to the Treaty of Paris, which officially ended the American Revolution. Tennessee became the sixteenth state in 1796, Ohio the seventeenth in 1803, and Louisiana the eighteenth in 1812. The sixteen stars place the decoration of the blades before the 1805 period of the Warner partnership, but it may have taken several years for a European cutler to receive word that Ohio had become the seventeenth state and an extra star would need to be added on the decorations. Or the blades could have been decorated in the first few years of the nineteenth century and not exported or mounted onto swords until several years later.⁷⁰

The patriotic theme of the blades is continued on the hilts of the swords. In addition to the adoption of the popular American symbol of the eagle for the pommel, the makers of the swords also incorporated the figure of Liberty into the design of the knuckle bows. The figure on MESDA's sword has her name, "LIBERTY," engraved across the band of her liberty cap—the maker didn't see the need to so blatantly identify her on the MFA sword. The presence of American eagles, figures of Liberty, as well patriotic motifs on the sword blades combine to express an especially strong statement about the swords' owners' political sentiments.

Upon first glance, the hilts of the swords seem to be identical in every way except color. MESDA's sword has a gold-gilt hilt and gold-gilt sheet metal scabbard while the MFA's hilt and scabbard are silver (*Figures 18 and 19*). The MFA sword's hilt and scabbard are silver through



FIGURE 18. Overall view of MESDA's Warner sword with scabbard.



FIGURE 19. Overall view of MFA Boston's Warner sword in scabbard.

Photograph courtesy of MFA Boston.

and through. The eagle head on MESDA's sword was cast from silver and gilt with gold. The remainder of its hilt—the knuckle bow, ferule, and quillon—were cast in bronze and then gilt with gold (see Figure 17).⁷¹ The scabbard is made of heavy-gauge copper and overlaid with gold sheeting.

The choice of silver or gold hilts and scabbards found on the Warner swords is not simply a personal preference of the officers that purchased them. Because the swords were made sometime between 1805 and 1812, they should comply with the 1801 U.S. Army regulations for officers' swords because the regulations for officers' swords were not altered until 1813.⁷² The 1801 Army regulations required that foot in-

fantry officers' swords be white with 28-inch blades. Mounted officers of the cavalry had the same swords but with 32-inch blades. Foot artillery officers were required to have yellow swords with 28-inch blades; and mounted artillery officers had the same swords but with 32-inch blades.^{73 74}

MESDA's sword, with a gilt silver and brass hilt and 34½-inch blade, was likely intended for a mounted artillery officer. The MFA sword, with a silver hilt and a 34½-inch blade, was intended for a cavalry officer. The length of the blades on the Warner sabers exceeded that 32-inch blades stated in the 1801 regulations, which is a feature associated with the blades found on the highest quality swords imported from France between 1793 and 1815.^{75 76}

With the likelihood that the blades of the Warner swords were purchased—probably made in France—the three possibilities for the swords' manufacture can be narrowed to only two—either the Warners purchased the blades and made the hilts themselves or they imported two complete French swords and retailed them to their customers.

Although the swords seem to be twins except in color, closer inspection reveals a number of other differences. Of particular interest is that the hilts share closely-related but not identical eagle-head pommels—specifically, the shape of the beaks and crests do not match. While there may have been two sets of molds for casting the pommels, the differences in shape and detail could have also been realized through hand chasing at the silversmith's bench. Comparison to other eagle-pommel swords carrying Thomas and Andrew Ellicott Warner's mark would allow for greater understanding of how and when the elements of the hilt were created, but no other swords with their mark are known to exist.⁷⁷

Several theories can be put forth to explain the differences seen in elements of the hilts on the Warner swords. One of the swords could be the result of a silversmith attempting to reproduce another weapon brought to him by a client or one the smith purchased elsewhere. Another possibility is that the craftsman was not satisfied with his first

sword and improved upon the design. A third possibility is that some time had elapsed between producing the first sword and the second and new preferred styles of sword hilts informed the silversmith.

A comparison of the Warner eagle-head pommels to those found on other swords from the period results in a startling realization that the Warner swords do not have any stylistic precedence. Figures 20, 21, and 22 illustrate examples of officer's swords with eagle-head pommel designs that were common in America from the 1790s through to the beginning of the nineteenth-century. Not until well after the War of 1812 and the emigration of Frederick W. Widmann from Germany to Philadelphia do eagle-pommel swords appear with an elongated neck and the knuckle bow inserted into the eagle's open mouth.⁷⁸ The unique design of the Warner eagle-pommel greatly reduces the chance that the brothers reproduced a sword brought to them by a client or purchased from abroad.

The shapes of the knuckle bows provide clear evidence that there was a lapse in time between the manufacture of the two swords, with MESDA's sword being made earlier than the one at the MFA. The D-shaped bow of MESDA's sword was popular through the first five or eight years of the nineteenth century but gave way to the reversed-P-shaped bow seen on the MFA's sword (*Figures 23 and 24*). The reversed-P shape would remain popular through to the 1840s.⁷⁹

The mark of the Warners struck on the quillons of the swords also give clues that the swords were not made at the same time and that MESDA's sword was produced first. Both marks are consistent in their irregularities from manufacture, establishing that the same tool probably made both marks, but there are indications of a loss of material on the tool when it was used to strike the MFA's sword—seen most dramatically below the first "A"—that are not seen on the MESDA sword's mark (*Figures 25 and 26*). This evidence suggests that the tool was damaged during the time between MESDA's sword being struck and the MFA's marking. The damage to the tool most likely occurred through repeated use over time.⁸⁰ Several months or possibly years may have passed between the time that the Warners struck the MESDA sword and the MFA sword with their mark.



FIGURE 20. Officer's sword marked by Adam Lynn; Alexandria, VA; ca. 1800. Silver, leather, and steel; LOA $33\frac{3}{4}$ ", LOA of pommel $5\frac{5}{8}$ ". MESDA Acc. 2024.105.

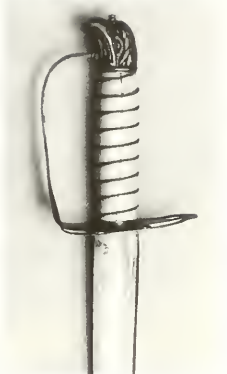


FIGURE 21. Officer's sword marked by William Ball; Baltimore, MD; 1789–1815. Silver and steel; LOA $33\frac{3}{4}$ ", LOA of pommel $5\frac{3}{4}$ ". Private collection, MRF S-6048.



FIGURE 22. Officer's sword by unknown maker; 1780–1800. Silver and steel; LOA $33\frac{1}{2}$ ", LOA of pommel $5\frac{1}{2}$ ". Private collection, MRF S-4569.



FIGURE 23. Side view (reverse) of the hilt of MESDA's Warner sword.



FIGURE 24. Side view of the hilt of MFA Boston's Warner sword. Photograph by the author.

FIGURE 25. Detail of the mark on MESDA's Warner sword.

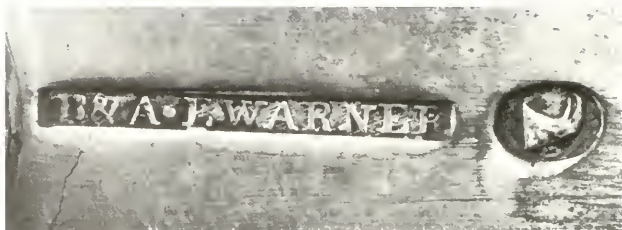


FIGURE 26. Detail of the mark on MFA Boston's Warner sword. *Photograph courtesy of MFA Boston.*



The placement of the Warners' mark on the top of the quillon of MESDA's sword presents the best evidence supporting a conclusion that the Warners made the hilt of that sword and mounted it on a purchased blade. The mark is extremely close to the ferrule that covers the joint of the grip and the quillon (*Figure 27*). It is so close to the ferrule that the sword must have been disassembled when the mark was struck. If the Warners had imported a complete sword to sell to their clientele, there would have been no need to take the sword apart to strike the mark. The mark on the MFA sword, in comparison, is about an inch further away from the ferrule (*see Figure 4*). This is not to say that the MFA's sword could not have been mounted by the Warners,

but there is no evidence that the sword has ever been disassembled.⁸¹

The unorthodox combination of metals used on the MESDA sword also points to the sword being mounted in Baltimore. The silver with gold wash of the pommel and backstrap is consistent with a customer requiring the regulation sword for an artillery officer, but the bronze used to cast the elements of the knuckle bow and quillon is curious. Very few surviving officer's swords have mixed metals in their hilts. While the pocketbook of the customer may have been a consideration, it would have been easier, and thus less costly, for the silver-smith to make the entire sword hilt from silver.⁸²

The difficulty of working with mixed metals is evidenced by the inelegant and quite obtrusive large screw seen square in the center of the eagle's beak on MESDA's sword (*see Figures 1 and 28*). A small pin or screw should have created an adequately strong joint where the bow rests in the eagle's mouth. It is not possible to visually determine if a pin or screw holds the joint on the MFA sword. If it were made of

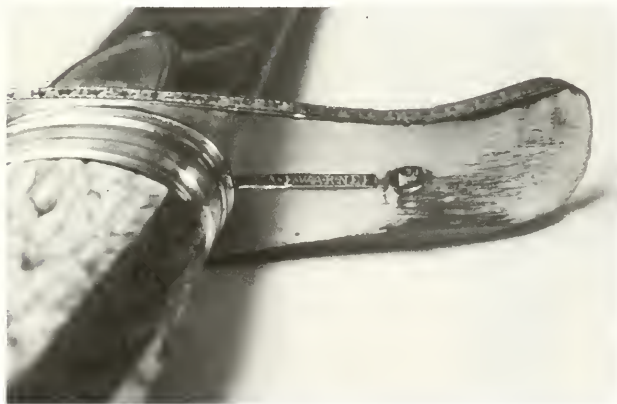


FIGURE 27. Detail of the mark in relation to the ferrule of MESDA's Warner sword.

silver and filed flush, a small pin or screw would be nearly invisible to the eye (*Figure 29*). The large and conspicuous screw holding the joint on the MESDA sword might be a later replacement for a smaller screw or pin that was lost or failed. If the large screw is a repair and the joint was broken, it might point to material incompatibility between the silver of the pommel and the bronze of the knuckle bow.

The placement of the mark and the use of silver and bronze on the MESDA sword suggest that the Warners produced the hilt in their shop and mounted it on a purchased blade. The wear seen on the Warner mark of the MFA's sword and its reversed-P knuckle bow suggest that it was manufactured some time after MESDA's sword. This evidence and the lack of stylistic precedence for the eagle-head pom-



FIGURE 28. Three-quarter view (reverse) of the hilt of MESDA's Warner sword.



FIGURE 29. Three-quarter view of the hilt of MFA Boston's Warner sword.

Photograph courtesy of MFA Boston.



FIGURE 30. Silver teapot from a tea service marked by Thomas Warner; Baltimore, MD; 1802–1814. *Private collection. Photograph by the author.*

mel can logically lead to a conclusion that the MFA's hilt was also made by the Warners and probably mounted onto an imported blade. The brothers—after having already made MESDA's sword—would not have sent a sword overseas to a cutler in Britain or Europe to copy it only to send it back to America for sale.

The most likely scenario is that a mounted infantry officer approached the Warners to purchase an eagle-pommel sword, possibly after seeing the MESDA sword. Some time had elapsed and the brothers wanted to improve on the design of their first sword or they simply wanted to update the second sword to current fashion. Either way, the second sword was created with an up-to-date reversed-P knuckle bow using silver for every component of the hilt to meet the regulations of an infantry officer's sword.

One more piece of evidence suggests that not only were the Warner swords mounted domestically, but firmly places the work in the Warner shop. There is a tea service in a private collection marked by Thomas Warner—alone, not in partnership with his brother—that has ball-and-claw feet with feathered knees (*Figures 30 and 31*).⁸³



FIGURE 31. Detail of knee engraving on the teapot shown in Figure 30. *Private collection. Photograph by the author.*

When the engraved feathers of the backstraps on the Warner swords are compared to those on the Thomas Warner tea service, the similarities are striking. If Thomas Warner engraved the tea service, the conclusion that the Warners mounted the swords themselves is unavoidable.

The clues found on the swords narrow the possibilities for their manufacture from two potential scenarios to one: the Warners purchased the blades—most likely from France—and then manufactured the hilts and mounted the swords themselves.

CONCLUSION

When viewed through an informed lens, the Thomas and Andrew Ellicott Warner swords in the MESDA and MFA collections provide an uncommon glimpse of the role that American silversmiths played in

providing high-quality swords to the officers of the U.S. Army and militias during the Federal period.

In the first decade of the nineteenth century, as tensions with France declined and war with Britain approached, the Warner brothers saw an opportunity to profit from the growing demand for military goods. Advertisements placed by their contemporaries in Baltimore and beyond show that officers of the army and militias would have looked to a silversmith to provide the swords, sashes, knots, and epaulets and other items necessary to assemble a proper and fashionable uniform. The Warners were eager to oblige.

Without the skills or means to produce high-quality sword blades themselves, the Warner brothers navigated a complex international network of suppliers and cutlers and procured first-rate sword blades. Rather than purchasing complete swords, they fashioned eagle-pommel hilts of their own design—maybe a customer requested a custom hilt, or perhaps the brothers chose to create an eagle-pommel design that they believed more accurately reflected Baltimore taste.

The earliest surviving Warner sword was produced for a mounted-artillery officer. A hybrid of brass and silver gilt with gold, the eagle-pommel hilt that the brothers created achieved an impressive and distinct style but suffered from limitations in its construction. Some time later a cavalry officer placed an order with the Warners and they took advantage of the opportunity to improve on their design. The result is a second sword that attained a refinement and elegance in silver that its mixed-metal predecessor could not.

The remarkable skill, ingenuity, and sophistication of American silversmiths working in the early Republic are readily apparent in the craftsmanship of the MESDA and MFA Warner swords. Just below the surface, however, lies a fascinating story of military might and geopolitical commerce that is told through the swords' bold expressions of Napoleonic classicism.

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NOTES

1. The author would like to thank the following for their assistance in researching and preparing this article: Gerald Ward, Nonie Gadsden, and Dennis Carr at MFA Boston; Erik Goldstein at Colonial Williamsburg; Ann Wagner and Don Fennimore at Winterthur; Catherine B. Holland; Stuart Mowbray of *Man at Arms* magazine; Jeanine Disviscour and Patricia Roberts at the Maryland Historical Society; Patrick Duggan of Imperial Half Bushel, Baltimore; Brittany Emens at the Baltimore Museum of Art; Tom Doyle; Bob Day; Jack Bethune; Graham Long at the Charleston Museum; Al and Charlotte Crabtree of The Silver Vault, Charleston; David Miller at the Smithsonian Institution; Les Jensen at the United States Military Academy; Kathy Staples; and Wes Stewart.

2. Jennifer Faulds Goldsborough, *Silver in Maryland* (Baltimore: Museum and Library of Maryland History/Maryland Historical Society, 1984), 28ⁿ; J. Hall Pleasants and Howard Sill, *Maryland Silversmiths, 1715-1830* (Baltimore: Lord Baltimore Press, 1930), 199-200. Both Goldsborough and Pleasants & Sill state the partnership of Thomas and Andrew Ellicott Warner beginning about 1805. Those scholars do not provide a citation for this assertion. The earliest documentation for the formation of the partnership found by this author is 1810 (*Baltimore Evening Post*, 15 January 1810, 3-4). The brothers announced that the partnership was dissolved in the 25 November 1813 *American & Commercial Daily Advertiser* (Baltimore).

3. Ian Quimby, *American Silver at Winterthur* (Winterthur, DE: Winterthur Museum, 1995), 13-18.

4. E. Andrew Mowbray, *The American Eagle Pommel Sword* (Lincoln, RI: Man at Arms Publications, 1988), 13; Daniel D. Hartzler, *Silver Mounted Swords: The Lattimer Family Collection* (self published, 2000), 178.

5. The first Warner in Pennsylvania was Captain William Warner, an English Quaker who emigrated to Blockley Plantation outside of Philadelphia in 1675. The plantation was comprised of land that is now home to much of the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University in West Philadelphia. This information about Warner ancestors was kindly provided by Bob Day, a descendent of the family. Coincidentally, both the Rose and Pahl sword blade makers of the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were established in Pennsylvania's Blockley Township (Mowbray, 153, 171-72). Further research could reveal a direct connection between the Warners and Rose and Pahl.

6. A number of tall case clocks by Cuthbert Warner survive as well as some spoons and a pair of tongs; MFSDA *Object Database*, Cuthbert Warner file.

7. Goldsborough, *Silver in Maryland*, 28ⁿ.

8. Thomas H. Warner Letters, ~ September 1813. Online: <http://www.haemo-sol.com/thomas/thomas.html> (accessed 16 January 2008); *American & Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 25 November 1813.

9. Thomas H. Warner Letters, ~ September 1813; ensigns were the lowest ranking officers in the United States Army.

10. Zebulon Pike was a noted explorer for whom Pikes Peak in Colorado is named. Pike would be killed at the Battle of York.

11. Thomas H. Warner Letters, 19 April 1813.

12. *Ibid.*, 29 April 1813.

13. *Ibid.*, ~ September 1813; *Baltimore American*, 25 November 1813.

14. *The Warner Family of Silversmiths to Baltimore* (Baltimore: The Peale Museum, 1971), 3.

15. For a detailed explanation of the Baltimore Assay Office, see Jennifer Faulds Goldsborough, *Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Maryland Silver* (Baltimore: Baltimore Museum of

- Art, 1975), 9–22; and Patrick M. Duggan, “Marks on Baltimore Silver, 1814–1860: An Exploration” in Goldsborough, *Silver in Maryland*, 26–37.
16. Pleasants and Sill, 198.
 17. *The Warner Family of Silversmiths to Baltimore*, 4.
 18. Goldsborough, *Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Maryland Silver*, 110.
 19. *American & Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 25 November 1813.
 20. *The Warner Family of Silversmiths to Baltimore*, 12.
 21. See endnote 2.
 22. Despite the obvious demand for officer’s swords, the two eagle-pommel swords by the Warner brothers discussed here would have been expensive items and beyond the means of an average officer. As a result, the Warner swords most likely were not quickly purchased from their shop; alternatively, the brothers may have had specific customers commissioning and/or requesting high-end eagle-pommel swords.
 23. Harold L. Peterson, *The American Sword, 1775–1945* (Philadelphia: Ray Riling Arms Books Company, 1965), 4, 59; Mowbray, 141.
 24. Peterson, appendix (p. 31).
 25. Mowbray, 141.
 26. Mowbray, 13.
 27. Philip M. Isaacson, *The American Eagle* (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1975), 2.
 28. *Ibid.*, 1, 156.
 29. *Ibid.*, 18–29.
 30. Nearly all eagle-head pommel swords depict some form of a crested eagle, not a bald eagle (Mowbray, 39). The variations of designs in eagle-head pommels is both amazing and to perplexing. See Hartzler, 176–179, for a detailed overview of the different styles of eagle-head pommels and their geographic relation.
 31. Mowbray, 15, 153.
 32. *Ibid.*
 33. *Ibid.*, 33.
 34. *Ibid.*
 35. *Ibid.*, 35.
 36. *Ibid.*, 31, 32.
 37. *Ibid.*, 35.
 38. *Ibid.*, 32; in the 1790s and early 1800s the Klingenthal factories were directed by the Coulaux brothers, who oversaw a period of improved quality in the product that would last through the Empire period.
 39. *Ibid.*, 16, 18.
 40. *Ibid.*, 19.
 41. *Ibid.*, 14.
 42. Petersen, 235.
 43. *Ibid.*, 236.
 44. Mowbray, 19.
 45. *Ibid.*
 46. Jacques A. [sic], “Philadelphia Gunmakers and the Evolution of the ‘Maryland Sword,’” Online: <http://americansocietyofarmscollectors.org/89/swordtest2.htm> (accessed 29 April 2008); Mowbray, 14, 153.
 47. Donald L. Fennimore and Ann K. Wagner, *Silversmith to the Nation* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Easthampton, MA: Antiques Collectors’ Club, 2007), 186–187, 230–231, 240–241; Mowbray, 209–211.

48. Fennimore and Wagner, 186–187, 230–231, 240–241; Mowbray, 215.
49. Mowbray, 14–15.
50. A search of advertisements in the American Antiquarian Society's *Early American Newspapers Digital (1690–1876)* database was conducted for the terms "sword" and "saber" in the 1800 to 1820 period. This search was conducted in 2006 when the *Early American Newspapers Digital (1690–1876)* database was available online through the Library of Congress website; this database is no longer available via the Internet outside the American Antiquarian Society's network.
51. MESDA's *Craftsman Database* defines the "Baltimore-area" as Baltimore proper and Baltimore County.
52. The ten Baltimore silversmiths between 1800 and 1820 that advertised swords are: George Aiken; Charles L. Boehme; Barden Burrow; Randall H. Cashell; Gelston & Gould; Howard Griffith; Littleton Holland; John Lynch; George W. Riggs; and John Walraven.
53. George Aiken, *American and Daily Advertiser* (Baltimore, MD), 11 June 1800, 3-3; Gelston & Gould, *Baltimore Patriot and Merchantile Advertiser*, 23 October 1818, 3-2; George W. Riggs, *Federal Gazette & Baltimore Daily Advertiser*, 16 October 1810, 3-3; George W. Riggs, *Baltimore Patriot*, 29 May 1813, 3-4.
54. George W. Riggs, *Independent American* (Baltimore, MD), 20 February 1810, 3-5; George W. Riggs, *Washington Federalist* (Georgetown, DC), 24 November 1807, 3-3; George Aiken, *American and Daily Advertiser* (Baltimore, MD), 11 June 1800, 3-3; Gelston & Gould, *The Maryland Censor*, 9 September 1818, 3-5.
55. The five silversmiths that advertised importing goods were George Aiken, Howard Griffith, Gelston & Gould, George W. Riggs, and John Walraven.
56. Gelston & Gould, *The Maryland Censor*, 9 September 1818, 3-5; Gelston & Gould, *Baltimore Patriot and Merchantile Advertiser*, 25 November 1818, 3-3; George Aiken, *American and Daily Advertiser* (Baltimore, MD), 11 June 1800, 3-3.
57. Advertisements placed by early-nineteenth-century silversmiths can misrepresent the nature of their business due to financial pressure to quickly sell goods that silversmiths purchased from distributors or manufacturers. Silversmiths would have paid cash for such goods or purchased them on credit extended by the distributors/manufacturers. Typical credit arrangements stipulated that full payment on notes was due only months after delivery. The need to quickly sell wares purchased for retail in order to realize a profit on their cash investment or pay a creditor often led silversmiths to incur the cost of advertising retail goods in order to expedite their sale; wares produced in their own shops may not be mentioned at all. The result is that advertisements placed by silversmiths may suggest that a particular craftsman had become more of a merchant when in reality they continued to make, engrave, clean, and repair silver in their shop but only felt the need to advertise the imported wares that had recently arrived on their shelves. Information presented in this endnote is summarized from Catherine B. Hollan *Virginia Silver: The Branching of the Trade, 1600–1800* (to be published by MESDA in 2009).
58. George Aiken, *American and Daily Advertiser* (Baltimore, MD), 11 June 1800, 3-3; George W. Riggs, *Independent American* (Georgetown, DC), 20 February 1810, 3-5; George W. Riggs, *Federal Gazette & Baltimore Daily Advertiser*, 16 October 1810, 3-3; George W. Riggs, *Washington Federalist* (Georgetown, DC), 25 November 1807, 3-3.
59. *Baltimore Patriot and Merchantile Advertiser* (Baltimore, MD), 22 May 1818, 2-5.
60. *Baltimore Patriot and Merchantile Advertiser* (Baltimore, MD), 10 October 1820, 3-1.
61. *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser* (Baltimore, MD), 21 March 1808, 3-3.
62. *Baltimore Evening Post*, 14 August 1807, 3-3.
63. *Federal Gazette & Baltimore Daily Advertiser* (Baltimore, MD), 13 August 1807, 3-4.
64. *Frederick-Town Herald* (MD), 24 September 1814, 1-2.
65. *American & Commercial Daily Advertiser* (Baltimore, MD), 14 March 1818, 3-3.

66. Peterson, 65–66.

67. *Ibid.*, 229–231; Mowbray, 238. Qualities of the fire-gilt blade decoration, especially the right-leaning lettering, are seen by some scholars as indications of French gilders (Conversation with Erik Goldstein, Curator of Mechanical Arts and Numismatics, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, VA, 2 November 2006).

68. Little research has been conducted into determining whether blades were imported with a marching scabbard or if scabbards of a general shape and length to match the blades came from separate sources, but at least one scholar believes that specialized craftsmen often made scabbards with a degree of tolerance to generically fit different blades (Conversation with Erik Goldstein, Curator of Mechanical Arts and Numismatics, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, VA, 2 November 2006).

69. Petersen, 21.

70. The number of stars incorporated into the Great Seal between 1794 and 1807 grew with the country. After attempting to strike coins featuring the seal with a star for each new state, the United States Mint abandoned those efforts circa 1797 and reverted back to the thirteen stars drawn on the original seal (email correspondence with Erik Goldstein, Curator of Mechanical Arts and Numismatics, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, VA, 12 April 2008).

71. Visual analysis of the knuckle bow, ferrule, and quillon of MESDA's sword led to the identification of the alloy as bronze; the back strap and pommel was tested for silver content.

72. Peterson, 65–66.

73. *Ibid.*

74. The difference in blade lengths reflects that a man on a horse is able to wield a heavier and longer blade without encumbering his movement. A longer, heavier blade was a preferable weapon because it would keep your enemy further away from you and would produce more force, inflicting greater injury. Thus, a soldier on horseback would always prefer to arm himself with a longer and heavier weapon.

75. Peterson, 65–66.

76. Despite the official regulations designating specific blade lengths and metal colors for of the swords of officers, individuals frequently ignored or loosely interpreted the regulations and wore swords of their own choice. *Ibid.*, 59.

77. Inquiries with numerous scholars, curators, collectors, and dealers of early American edged weapons and Baltimore silver revealed another eagle-pommel sword marked "A.W. Warner" [*sic*], which may have been a misreading of the mark for "A.E. Warner" (Butterfield & Butterfield Auction, Los Angeles, 20 November 1989, Lot 6001). An unmarked example that is stylistically related to the eagle-head pommels of the Warner swords but with a cutlass-type knuckle bow is held in the Lattimer collection (Hartzler, 239).

78. Mowbray, 181. There are two swords contemporary to the MESDA and MFA swords that have eagle-head pommels that are similar but not exact; see endnote 77. The unmarked sword in the Lattimer collection could be a product of the Warner shop but it is impossible to be certain.

79. Peterson, 68.

80. Conversation with Erik Goldstein, Curator of Mechanical Arts and Numismatics, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, VA, 2 November 2006.

81. The silver plug that covers the nut affixing the tang of the MESDA sword's blade to the hilt is missing causing the hilt to be very loose and suggesting that the sword had been disassembled many times in the past; the plug covering the tang nut on the MFA sword is still firmly in place and shows no evidence that it has ever been removed.

82. Mowbray, 141.

83. The Thomas Warner tea service was illustrated in Pleasants & Sill, plate XL1.

Stony Creek Fraktur Artist Identified

H. E. COMSTOCK

INTRODUCTION

DUE TO A ROMANTIC YET RIGID association with history, today's scholars, students, and collectors are enticed to search for the identification of various artifact producers. Our American desire for art signed by its maker became acute during the twentieth century. Today, museums and collectors are able to glean more information and realize answers to myriad questions when art is associated with a signature endorsement. Unfortunately, most southern fraktur artists rarely signed their work. Perhaps their aversion was due to an inhibition as a result of religious beliefs—after all, fraktur were deeply rooted in Germanic religious traditions. Many early fraktur artist were devoted to their churches, which did not encourage self aggrandizement. Whatever the motives, it is unfortunately true that few southern fraktur artists identified their work.

Scholars, students, and collectors have for many years attempted to identify the very important “Stony Creek” fraktur artist (*Figure 1*). One such scholar, the late Klaus Wüst, spent years of research and investigation looking for the identity of this artist.¹ Wüst's efforts were unsuccessful despite his astute and copious scholarly work. Thus it is with a sense of melancholy that the identity of the Stony Creek Artist has been revealed after Wüst's passing. Through a fortunate but coincidental series of events, a student copybook revealing the identity of the Stony Creek



FIGURE 1. Fraktur
 for Johannes Lin-
 demuth by Henry
 Heltzel (Stony Creek
 Artist); Shenandoah
 County, VA; 1814–15.
 Ink on paper; HOA
 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", WOA 13 $\frac{1}{8}$ ".
 Private collection. Photo-
 graph by the author.



FIGURE 1A. Detail.

Artist was brought to this author's attention. The name associated with the copybook has opened a pathway for revelations about the artist's history and era.

Student copybooks are customarily paper-backed booklets with varying numbers of pages. The books were sometimes purchased from local merchants but were often made by the schoolmaster or teacher. Copybooks were used by a student to record the teacher's instructions, as a reference source or a means for the teacher to write in homework and other instructions to a lesson presentation, or served as a guide for accomplishing homework assignments. In this particular instance, the book was used by the teacher to assign homework and provide instructions for lessons.

The copybook that has broken years of fruitless effort to identify the Stony Creek Artist belonged to student George Peter Dodson of Shenandoah County, Virginia.² The clue that revealed the Stony Creek Artist is found on page 23 (current number). The following information—in the hand of the Stony Creek Artist—is written: "Compound Addition, Shenandoah County Virginia, February 16th 1826 H. Heltzel" (*Figures 2 and 2a*). The remainder of this article will explore the evidence—both genealogic and stylistic—that links "H. Heltzel" to the Stony Creek Artist.³

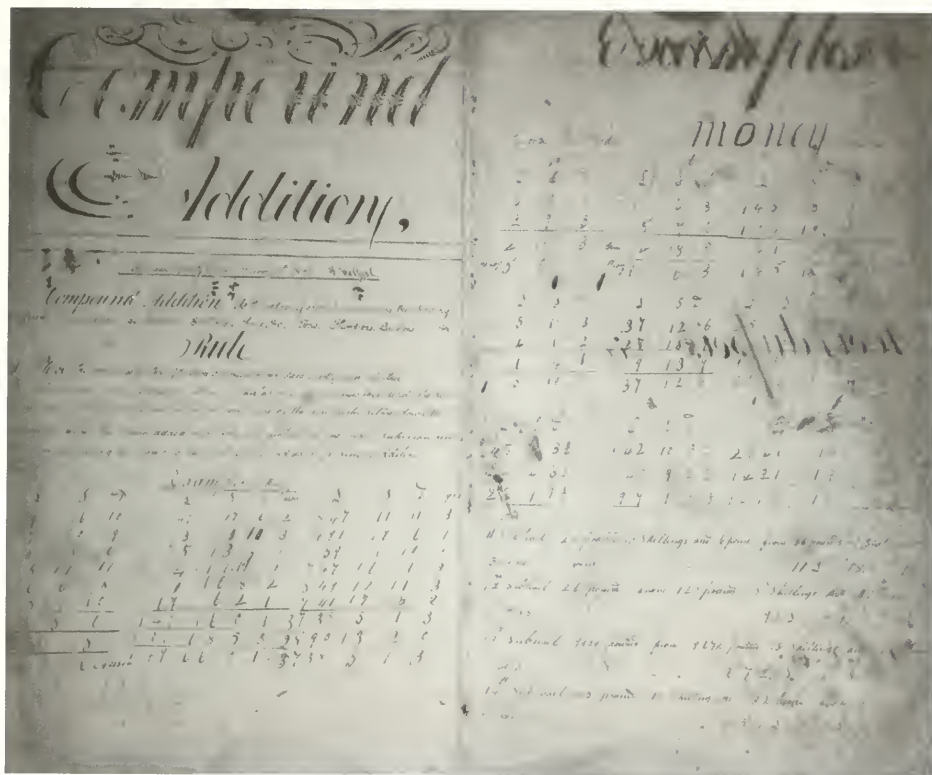


FIGURE 2. Page 23 (current number) from the George Peter Dodson copy-book. Collection of the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley, Winchester, Virginia (hereafter MSV). Image courtesy of MSV.

Shenandoah County Virginia February 16th 1826 W. S. S. S. S.

FIGURE 2A. Detail.

"H. Heltzel" has been found to be Henry Heltzel.⁴ Born in Shenandoah County, Virginia, on 29 November 1788 to Charles and Catherine "Kitty" Hoover Helzle, Henry Heltzel died on 11 June 1867, in Noble County, Indiana, "age 78 years, 6 months and 12 days [sic]." Climbing Henry Heltzel's family tree, it is found that his maternal grandfather was Heinrich Huber of Frederick County, Virginia. His paternal grandfather was Heinrich Holtzel, or Hetzel. Inconsistency in the spelling of names was common; there were at least twelve different spelling configurations of the Heltzel name within the Stony Creek area of Shenandoah County, Virginia. Both Henry's paternal grandfather and his paternal uncle, John Hetzel, were schoolteachers—and the uncle is known to have produced ornamented fraktur in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (Figure 3).⁵

Klaus Wust has shown from the confirmation records of the Stony Creek Zion-Pine Church that a "Henry Hölzteles" was confirmed on the first day of May 1796—a Sunday called Rogate.⁶ There were two separate Henry Heltzel recorded as members of the Stony Creek Zion-Pine Church. The Henry Heltzel from the copybook would have been about eight years old in 1796.⁷

The second volume of Klaus Wust's *Lutheran Zion-Pine Church Records* contains various lists of Heltzel births. Henry Heltzel and wife Elizabeth are shown to be the parents of Anna Maria, in 1811, Johann Charl, in 1816, and Scharlota, 1818.⁸ These names and dates have been confirmed through family genealogy records.

There remain several questions concerning Henry Heltzel's education and his training for fraktur writing. For example, his art as the Stony Creek Artist exhibits various similarities to the work of the so-called "Frederick County Record Book Artist." Frederick County is adjacent to Shenandoah County in the lower, or northern, Shenandoah Valley. Henry Heltzel's maternal grandfather, Heinrich Huber, owned a large farm just south of Winchester in Kernstown, Frederick County. Winchester would have been a convenient location for Henry Heltzel to have received instruction by the teacher and frak-

in 1767. Further research exploring the relationship between Henry Heltzel and the “Frederick County Record Book Artist” may prove to be enlightening.

In 1810, Henry Heltzel married Elizabeth Helsley in Shenandoah County, Virginia.¹⁰ Elizabeth’s mother was Rosina, nee Voltz. The Stony Creek Artist produced multiple fraktur for the Voltz (or Foltz) family of Shenandoah County.¹¹

Henry Heltzel moved to Pickaway County, Ohio, in 1828 and settled in the area of Circleville. The last date in the George Peter Dodson’s copybook is 9 February 1828 (current page 11); however, the entry is not in Heltzel’s handwriting, supporting a conclusion that Heltzel had moved to Ohio and Dodson was being taught by somebody else. The 1830 Federal Census for Washington Township, Pickaway County, Ohio, lists a Henry Heltzel.

Henry Heltzel’s inheritance is recorded on 15 March 1833 when Catherine Heltzel, widow of Charles Heltzel, in consideration of one dollar, gave to John Heltzel, of Hardy County, Virginia, and Henry Heltzel, of Pickaway County, Ohio, the right and title to the enslaved Jenny and her child, as well as the children of a slave named Nancy (deceased): Wilson, Milly, James, and Charles. The slaves had been willed to Catherine by her father, Henry Hoover.¹²

In 1834, Henry Heltzel was serving as justice of the peace for Pickaway County. On 13 September 1834 he acknowledged the power-of-attorney agreement between Barbara Bowman, Catharine Trees, and John Trees, of Shenandoah County, Virginia. This agreement was signed by Henry Heltzel and returned to the Shenandoah County Court, in Virginia, on 3 October 1834, where it was admitted to record. Samuel S. Denny, clerk of the Pickaway County Court, certified in this document that Henry Heltzel was a “regular acting Justice of the Peace in the County and State aforesaid, duly commissioned and qualified as such.”¹³

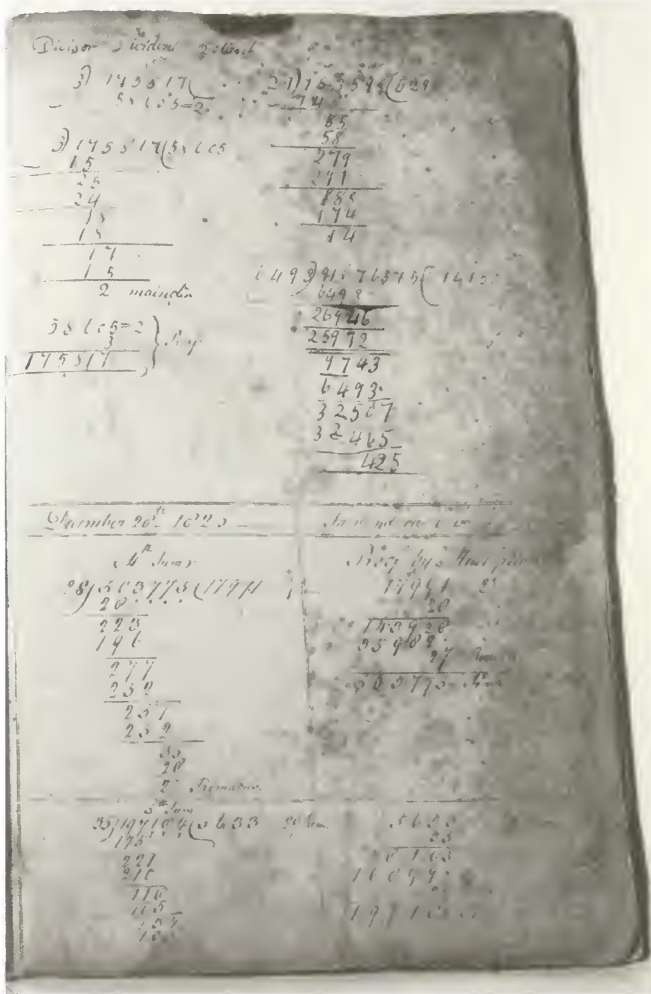
Shenandoah County court records document Henry Heltzel as living in Pickaway County Ohio on 7 November 1836.¹⁴ According to court records of Pickaway County, Ohio, Heltzel held the office of justice of the peace between 1833 and 1836.¹⁵

In 1836–37, Heltzel moved further west to Perry Township, Noble County, Indiana. There, in 1839, he was elected as an assessor. He served this office for two years. Heltzel was then elected as Noble County's recorder and served in that capacity for six years.¹⁶ In the 1840 Federal census of Perry Township, Noble County, Indiana, Heltzel is listed with six members of the household: three females and three males, the oldest male under sixty years of age.

STYLISTIC EVIDENCE FOR IDENTIFYING THE STONY CREEK ARTIST

Henry Heltzel can be identified as the Stony Creek Artist through his teaching endeavors with George Peter Dodson. Dodson's student copybook exhibits handwriting very similar to that of the Stony Creek Artist's, as well as many of the ornamentations that were repetitiously used on one or more existing fraktur attributed to the artist. This author has examined many certificates attributed to the Stony Creek Artist and has identified numerous stylistic similarities between the Dodson copybook and surviving Stony Creek Artist fraktur. For the purpose of this article, only the most compelling evidence for identifying Henry Heltzel as the Stony Creek Artist will be presented.

Supporting the genealogic evidence for identifying Henry Heltzel as the Stony Creek Artist is the fact that his ornamented manuscripts contain a number of similar elements to the only known work by his uncle, John Hetzel (*see Figures 1 and 3*).¹⁷ Parallels between works, while not exactly the same, include: the border style construction, certificate size, the use of undulating and stylized floral ornamented frieze containing the text, the similarity in selection of floral motifs, and the use—excessively so by John Hetzel—of the *Schnorkelwerk* enhanced letters.¹⁸ All of these ornamentations were commonly used by the Stony Creek Artist. The comparison here between Figures 1 and 3 exhibits more than simply a coincidental decorative influence between Henry Heltzel and his uncle John. Although Henry was much more accomplished in his handwork, one can see that the ornamented



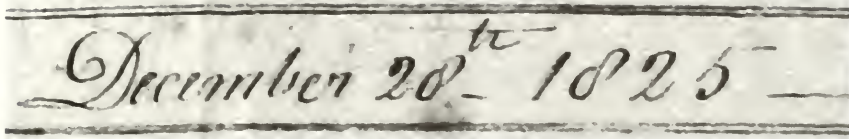


FIGURE 4A.
Detail.

frieze in both certificates have an undulant flow of decorative herba-ceous appointments similarly rendered.

Heltzel was a master at penmanship, a fact revealed within Dodson's copybook as well as in the artist's fraktur. Little German penmanship exists within Dodson's copybook, therefore penmanship comparisons of Heltzel's handwriting in the copybook and that found on the Stony Creek Artist's work are primarily limited to English-language examples of Stony Creek Artist fraktur. It can be estimated that at least 35 per-cent of the fraktur by this artist exhibits English-language infill. Fortu-nately, the artist's ornamentations are consistent regardless of language script used and all extant fraktur attributed to the Stony Creek Artist can be used in comparing the ornamentation found in the copybook.

Despite the difficulties of comparing German- and English-language handwriting, there are similarities of note between the Dodson copy-book and Stony Creek Artist fraktur. In Figure 2, depicting portions of the copybook's page 23 (current number), Henry Heltzel signs his name and produces quite a production in penmanship. His handwriting of "Shenandoah County Virginia" favorably compares to handwriting ex-amples found on Stony Creek Artist fraktur employing English lan-guage. In addition, the unusual figure "8" found in the date of "Decem-ber 28th 1825" (page 17 of the copybook, current number; *see Figures 4 and 4a*) is occasionally exhibited on the Stony Creek Artist's fraktur. And the uppercase "E" shown in the copybook word "Examples" at the top of Figure 5 (*see Figure 5c*) is identical in every respect to an existing Stony Creek fraktur made for Samuel Effinger (not illustrated).¹⁹

Comparing floral ornamentation, the examples of the daisy flow-ers that appear adjacent to the "Case 4th" heading in the copybook

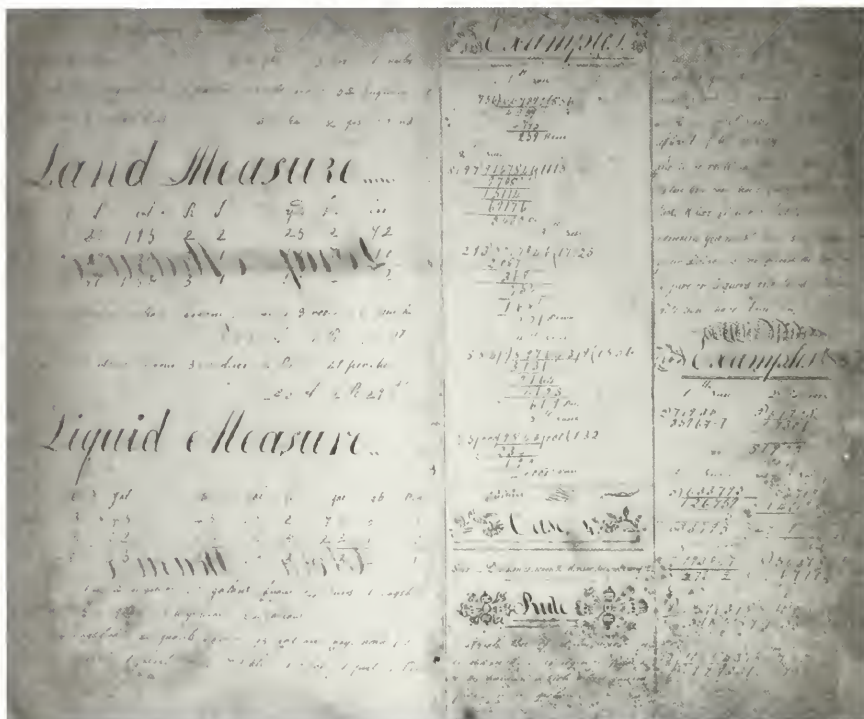


FIGURE 5. Page 27A (current number) of the George Peter Dodson copybook. Collection of MIST. Image courtesy of MIST.

(see Figure 5a) are nearly identical to those seen above “Johannes” on the Lindemuth fraktur (see Figure 1a). These ornamental daisies share a similar number of petals—six on some and seven on others—with the addition of dots between the petals. And the small three-petal flower at the end of the leaved plant-like structure above “Case 5th” in the Dodson copybook (Figures 6 and 6a) is stylistically similar to those seen in the corners of the central panel of the Johannes Capp

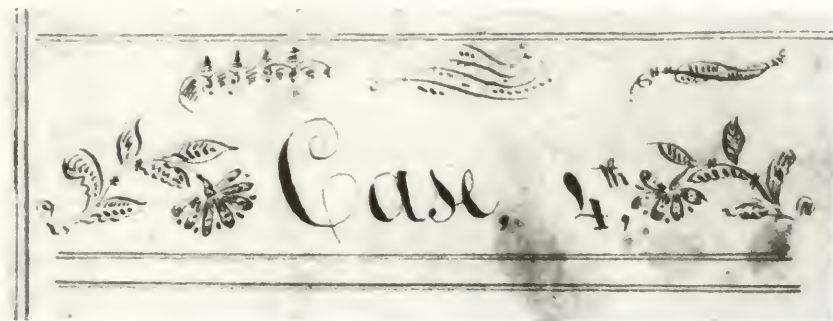


FIGURE 5A. Detail.

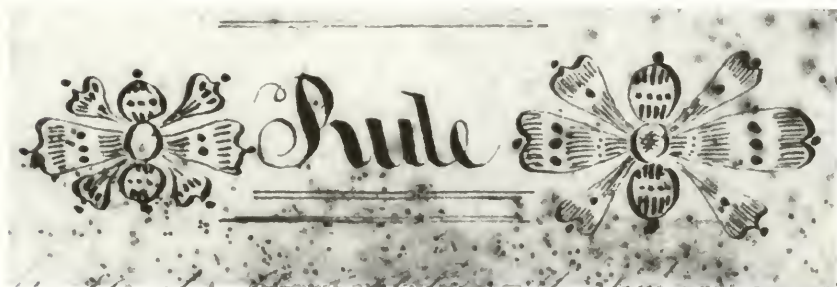


FIGURE 5B. Detail.

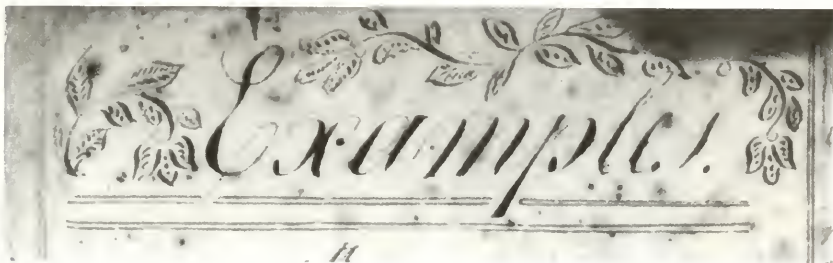


FIGURE 5C. Detail.

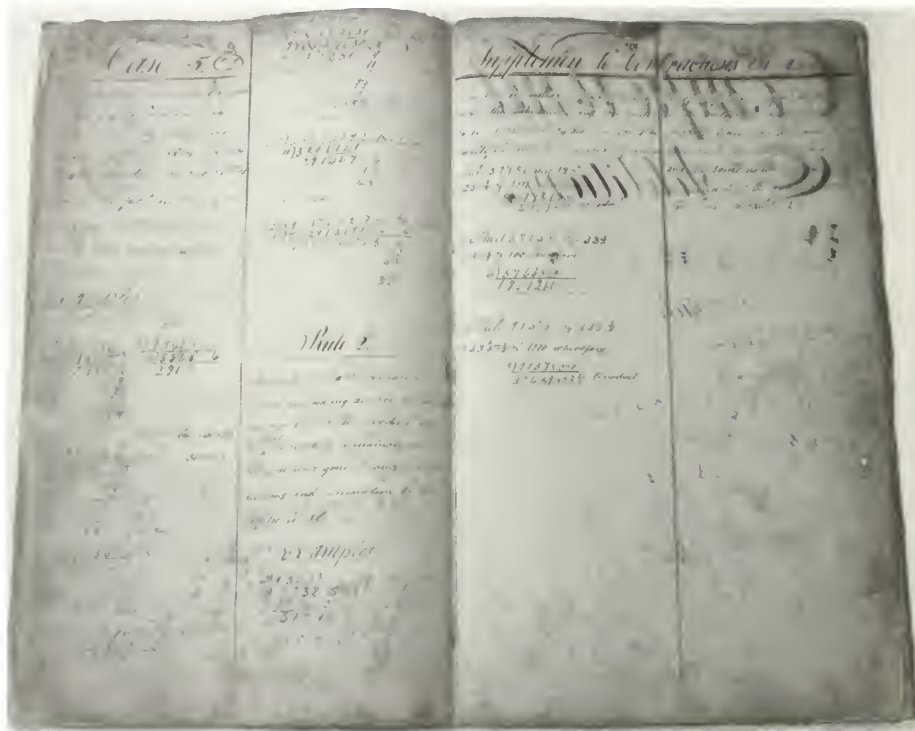


FIGURE 6. Page 2 (current number) of the George Peter Dodson copybook.
Collection of MSI; Image courtesy of MSI;



FIGURE 6A.
Detail.

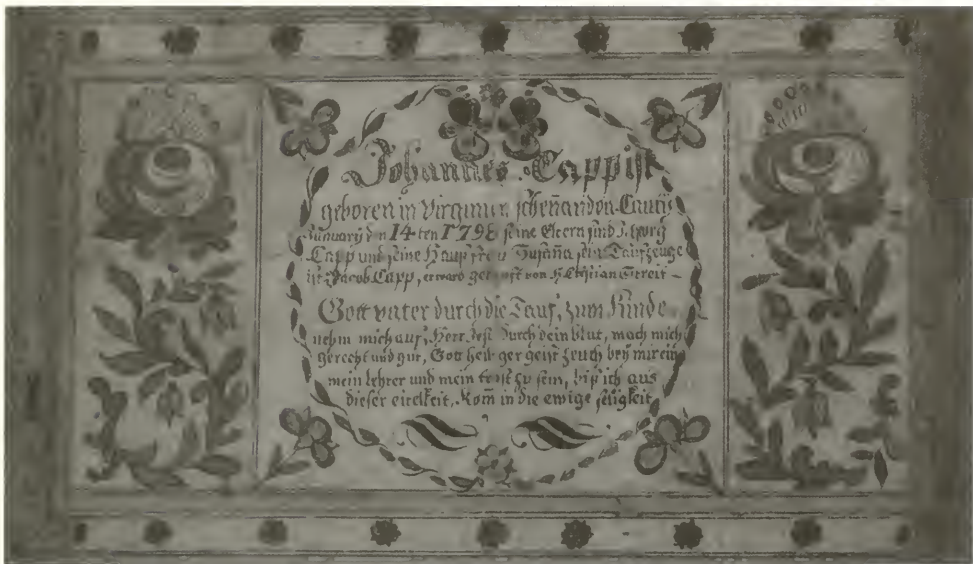


FIGURE 7. Fraktur for Johannes Capp by Henry Heltzel (Stony Creek Artist); Shenandoah County, VA; 1798. Ink on paper; HOA (in frame) 20", WOA (in frame) 30". Collection of MSI. Photograph courtesy of MSI.

(pronounced “Copp”) certificate (Figure 7). This three-petal flower is found often on other Stony Creek fraktur.

The technique employed to create the stylized pansy flower adjacent to the “Rule” heading seen in Figure 5 (see Figure 5b) is shared by the flowers shown at the top of the central wreath in the certificate in Figure 7 and near the corners of the borders of the certificate in Figure 8. While the four long center petals seen in the fraktur do not appear in the copybook, the artist used the same calligraphic strokes in construction—that is to say that the penmanship strokes of the pansy construction in the copybook are the same as the method used to create the pansies in the illustrated certificates. The Stony Creek Artist



FIGURE 7A. Detail.

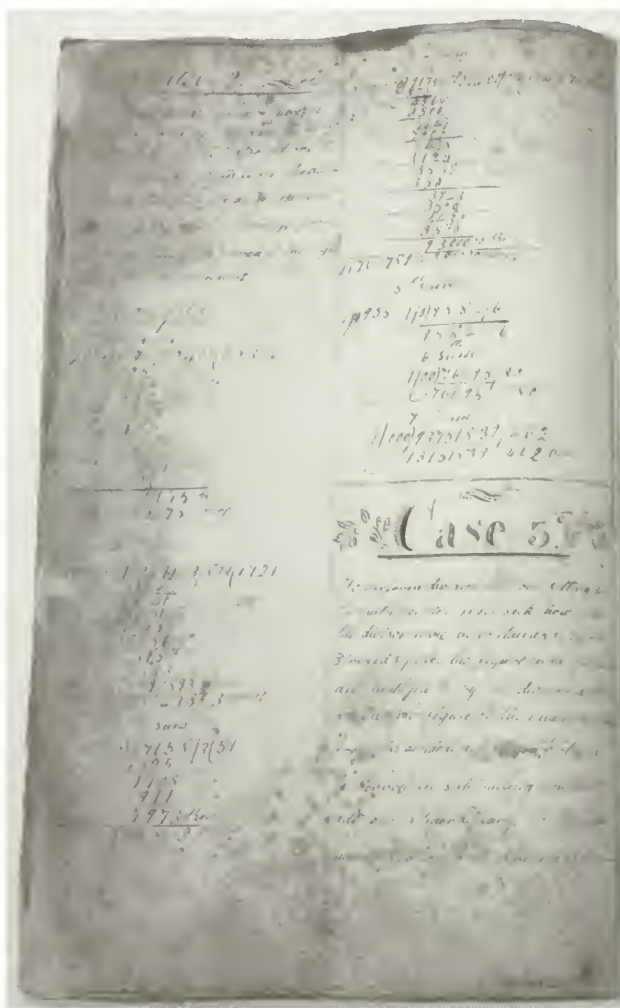


FIGURE 9. Page from the George Peter Dodson copybook (page number indiscernible). Collection of MSI. Image courtesy of MSI.

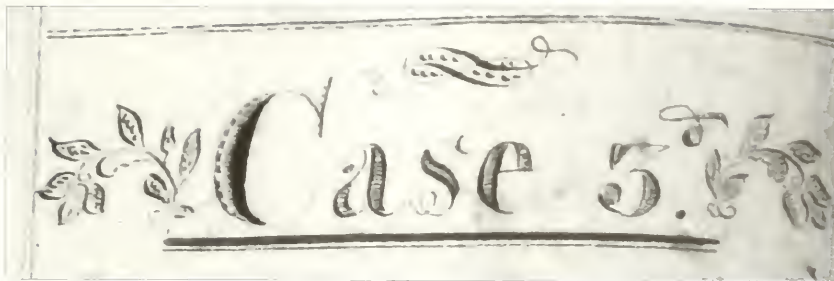


FIGURE 9A. Detail.

often used this ornamenting device on his more elaborate formats. He also decorated certificates with six petal pansies, but no known examples compare exactly to those shown here in the copybook.

The most compelling stylistic evidence for Henry Heltzel's identification as the Stony Creek Artist can be found in Figures 5, 9, and 10. Above the "Examples" heading seen in Figure 5c as well as next to the "Case 3rd" heading shown in Figure 9a, the teacher Henry Heltzel drew stylized tulips in the same form as is found on most of his fraktur. Heltzel's tulip depictions in Figures 5 and 9 are connected to the flower stems which end in a c-scroll or curl, just as they do on *all* cases of known Stony Creek fraktur (for examples, see the George Miller fraktur in Figure 10 and the certificate illustrated in Figure 8).

Often times Heltzel would in-color this c-scroll, which would obscure the curl, as seen in Figures 1, 7, and 11. But close observation reveals that the curl was first placed there (see Figure 7a). Observation of numerous Stony Creek fraktur has shown that Heltzel never failed to connect his tulips and stems in this c-scroll fashion. When this artist employed extremely large stylistic tulips, this c-scroll embellishment was absent (see Figures 7 and 8).

The stylized tulips with stems that end in c-scrolls provide persuasive evidence to identify Henry Heltzel as the Stony Creek Artist, for there are no other known American fraktur artist who used this decorative device.

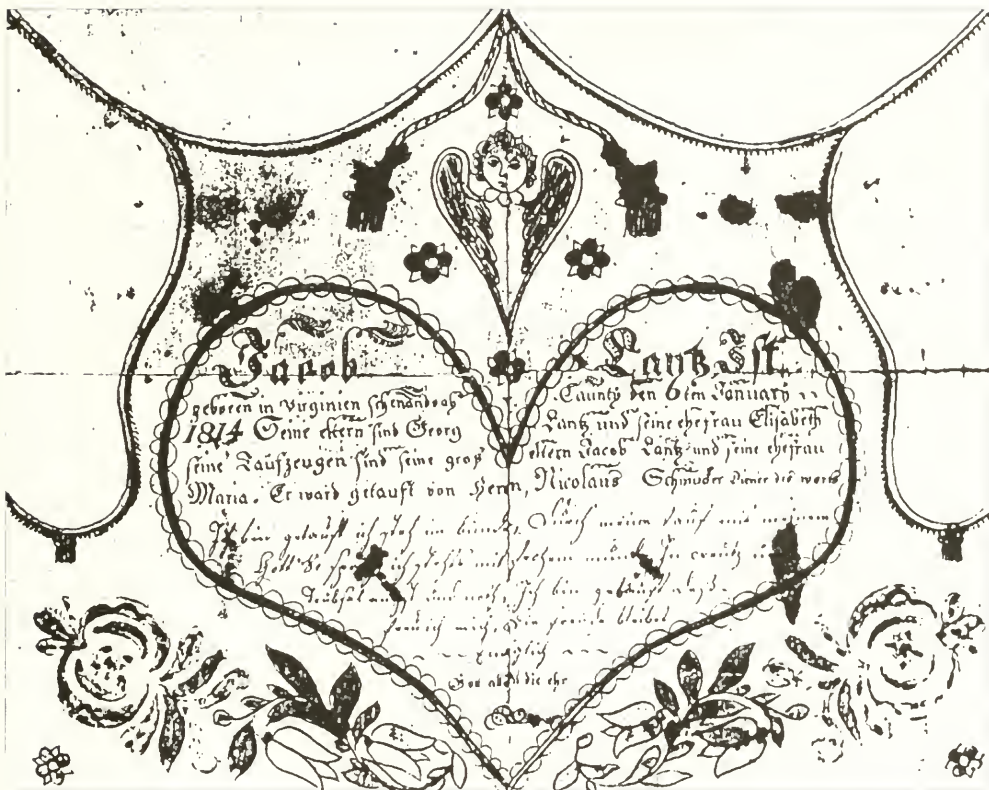


FIGURE 11. Fraktur by the Henry Heltzel (Stony Creek Artist); Shenandoah County, VA; 1825–28. Ink on paper; HOA ca. 12¼", WOA 8½". Private collection. Photograph by the author.

CONCLUSION

Henry Heltzel was primarily a freehand artist whose preciosity and consistency with his ornamental decorative devices have placed him among the very best of frakturist native to the South. Whether using English- or German-language script for his fraktur infill, or assigning homework and providing instructions to lessons in the Dodson copybook, Heltzel's accomplished ornamentation talents approached impeccable results.

Identity of fraktur artists is very important to properly understand the context surrounding their product. The identity of the Stony Creek Artist has eluded all investigators to this time, and there were quite a few. Historic manuscript documents, i.e. student copybooks, letters, diaries, etc., supply the best hope for current scholars to provide attribution for the many surviving fraktur by unknown artists. Teachers who were also fraktur artists, such as Henry Heltzel, often embellished their students' copybooks with their own accomplished ornamental devices, no doubt, in part, as an advertisement aimed at the students' parents in hopes of receiving commissions. Therefore, examining student copybooks, in particular, well may be an answer to the identification of such artists as Virginia's "Wild Turkey" artist or the very elusive "Ehre Vater" artist of Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.²⁰

In the case of the Stony Creek Artist, had not the Dodson copybook come to the attention of someone who could interpret its content, this elusive artist would have perhaps remained an enigma for sometime.

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NOTES

1. Klaus Wüst was a gentleman, in every respect, who had spent many years in the study of German-American history to the point one could arguably state that he was the foremost such scholar in this entire country. Is it not ironic and perhaps unfair that a most qualified researcher spends most of his life seeking specific information only to be denied the answer while some other individual, through a stroke of pure luck, finds the evidence to reveal the answer? Such is the lot of a researcher. Thus, this article is dedicated to a good friend in life, Klaus Wüst.

2. The George Peter Dodson student copybook is now in the collection of the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley, Winchester, Virginia.

3. The Dodson student copybook existed in its original period without page numbers. Each page has been numbered during the twentieth century, thus identified as "current number." The author was unfortunately required to use a black and white photocopy of the Dodson student copybook for all comparison aspects of this article. Some pages, due to the nature of photocopy results, do not reveal the entire page contents. On some pages current numbers are not visible. Therefore, there may be some discrepancies in the numbers cited and actual current page numbers.

4. The Anglicized "Henry" will be used throughout this article despite the fact that Heltzel was often identified using the Germanic "Heinrich" as well as the English "Henry."

5. Russell and Corinne Earnest, *Papers for Birth Dyes*, second edition (York, PA: Schuman-Heritage, 1997), 387; Catherine Hutchins, ed., *Arts of the Pennsylvania Germans* (Winterthur, DE: W. W. Norton & Company for the Henry Francis Du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1983), 260–61, figure 256.

6. For the sake of readability, the spelling "Heltzel" will be used throughout the remainder of this article when referring to Henry, the schoolteacher who created the Dodson copybook.

7. Klaus Wüst, *Lutheran Zion-Pine Church Records, 1786–1827*, Vol. 1 (Eninburg, VA: Shenandoah History, 1985), 31.

8. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, 10, 14, and 16.

9. It has recently been discovered through research that during the latter part of the eighteenth and the early-nineteenth centuries schoolteachers played a significant role in matters of estate settlement. Schoolteachers were employed as inventory recorders and recording clerks for the estate sale. Shenandoah County Will books prove over and over that schoolteachers dominated these estate functions. In various Shenandoah County Will books both Charles and Henry are found to occasionally fill such positions.

10. Shenandoah County records list the marriage of Henry Heltzel and Elizabeth Helsley on 10 August 1810.

11. Klaus Wüst, "Fraktur and the Virginia Germans" in *Arts in Virginia* (Richmond, VA: Virginia Museum, 1974), 57.

12. Shenandoah County Deed Book MM, p. 220, Woodstock, VA.

13. Court records of Pickaway County, Ohio. Online: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~ohpickaw/biotrees.htm> (accessed 27 November 2007).

14. Shenandoah County Will Book QQ, p. 11, Shenandoah County Courthouse, Woodstock, VA; Henry and Elizabeth Heltzel of Pickaway County, Ohio, sell all rights and interests to land, inherited by Catherine Heltzel from Henry Hoover, to John Heltzel of Hardy County, Virginia, for 100.00 current money, ~ November 1836.

15. The deed of Benjamin and Catherine Coffman of 4 August 1834 was witnessed and sworn to by signature by Henry Heltzel, justice of the peace, Pickaway County, Ohio. Deed Book 12, p. 287. Circleville, OH: Deed processed as before signed Henry Heltzel, acting justice of the

peace, *ibid.*, p. 31, 10 December 1833. Henry Heltzel performs the marriage of William Wusted and Catherine Gephart Pickaway County, Ohio, Marriage Record Book 3, p. 201, 6 May 1836, Circleville, OH. Various Pickaway County court records exhibit Henry Heltzel's signature as justice of the peace.

16. The citing of Heltzel's offices in Noble County, Indiana, are taken from family histories. The Noble County, Indiana, courthouse burned to the ground in 1856. These cited offices therefore are not to be presented as confirmed.

17. The Anglicized "John" will be used throughout this article despite the fact the uncle signed his only known fraktur using the Germanic form of his name, "Johannes."

18. *Schnörkelwerk* refers to the calligraphic and ornamental flourishes that embellish some of the letters and words on fraktur.

19. The author has been given a photograph of the Samuel Effinger Stony Creek fraktur. This photograph shows the fraktur's uppercase "E" in "Effinger" to be identical to the ones shown in the foreground sample in Figure 5. Unfortunately, permission to reproduce the photograph for this article was not available.

20. The title page from Abraham Landev's copybook title page exhibits the extraordinary effort a teacher would take in order to impress both the student and the student's parents: shown in *The Pennsylvania German Fraktur of the Free Library of Philadelphia*, Vol. 1, compiled by Frederick S. Weiser and Howell Hecaney (Breinigsville, PA: Pennsylvania German Society and the Free Library of Philadelphia, 1976), figure 186.

Samplers of the Carolina Piedmont

The Presbyterian Connection and the Bethel Group¹

PATRICIA V. VEASEY

AN IMPORTANT GROUP OF EIGHT surviving South Carolina Piedmont schoolgirl samplers, collectively named the Bethel Group, demonstrate a regional preference in taste and design that reflects the Scotch-Irish Presbyterian influence in the region. The group is so named to suggest that the sampler makers received instruction at academies associated with or sponsored by Bethel Presbyterian Church in York County, South Carolina.

There exists no specific Scotch-Irish embroidery style, and the Bethel Group samplers display elements of needlework from Scotland and Northern Europe conveyed to Northern Ireland.² The influence of Northern European embroidery patterns on Carolina Piedmont samplers also came with the Moravian immigrants to Pennsylvania and North Carolina. The transference and amalgamation of cultural traditions is best explained through the Bethel community's Presbyterian emphasis on education. Presbyterian ministers and their wives organized academies such as Yorkville Female Academy in Yorkville, South Carolina, through a network of clerical, business, and social connections enhanced by the organizational structure of the church. Teachers, educational supplies, and curriculum preferences of Presbyterian-sponsored academies were obtained through the networks and brought current trends in education to the southern backcountry from Europe, New

York, and Philadelphia.³ The Bethel Group samplers illustrate that needlework in largely Presbyterian communities of the Carolina Piedmont exhibits a similar transference of styles, materials, and techniques.

SCOTCH-IRISH CULTURE AND PRESBYTERIAN MOVEMENT IN THE SOUTHERN COLONIES

The migration of people to the early South defined its culture. To understand the Bethel Group samplers, it is necessary to consider the Scotch-Irish who settled in the Carolina Piedmont, their Presbyterianism, and from where and when they arrived. Carolina Piedmont settlements in the eighteenth century were dominated by the Scotch-Irish, a people who were on the move throughout their history.⁴ They were native to the Lowlands of Scotland, but migrated to Northern Ireland at the encouragement of the English King James I (James VI of Scotland), who established a plantation in Ulster in 1610. For over one hundred years the lowland Scots moved back and forth across the Irish Sea to Ulster in waves of migration for political, familial, and financial reasons before migrating to the New World.

The Ulster Plantation was a blend of the English, Scots, and native Irish who vied with one another for political and religious reasons. In this environment the Scots, persecuted and excluded by the Anglican English for their Calvinist beliefs and harassed by the Irish Catholics, adopted new lifeways. In the New World, Catholics, Anglicans, and Presbyterians were joined by Lutherans, Baptists, Huguenots, and Quakers. This mixing of cultures had a lasting influence on a needlework tradition the Scotch-Irish women brought to the southern English colonies (*Figures 1, 1a, and 1b*). A new Scotsman emerged from Ulster Plantation, one who was English-speaking, insistent on education, and more independent, individualist, and uncompromising than his Presbyterian brethren in Scotland.⁵

The Presbyterian Scotch-Irish migration to the New World began in the 1680s. Arriving in the colony of Maryland in 1683, Scotch-Irish missionary Rev. Francis Makemie proselytized to American Indians

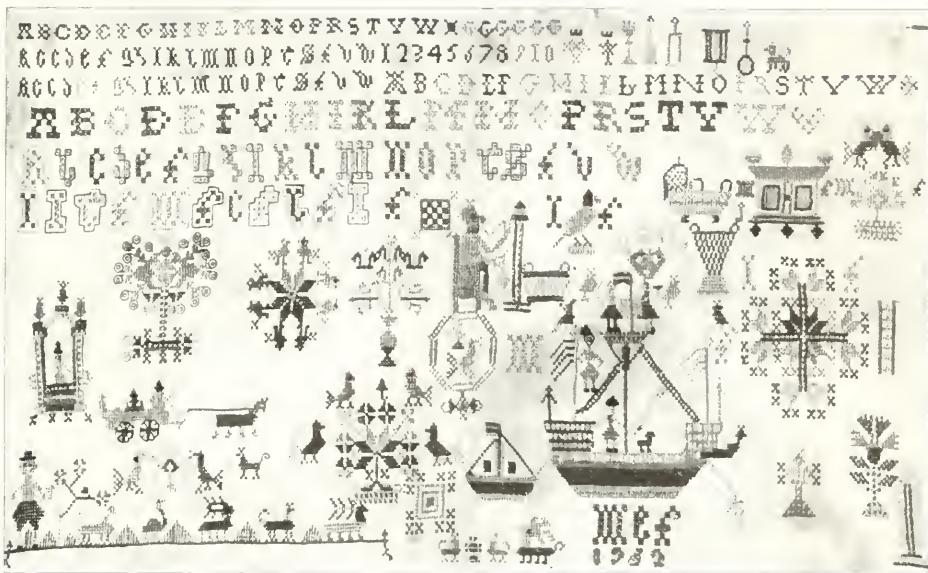


FIGURE 1A. Sampler (merklap) by a maker with the initials "mef"; Friesland, Netherlands; 1762. Silk thread on linen; HOA: 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", WOA: 20". *Private collection. Photograph courtesy of Curious Works Press, Greenville, SC.*

and European immigrants. Twenty years later his efforts led to the first established presbytery, or church governing body, in the New World.⁶ By the 1730s, Scottish universities lacked an adequate supply of clergy destined for colonial Presbyterian churches. This resulted in the establishment of Presbyterian institutions of learning in the English colonies. For Presbyterians, education was an integral element of faith, a principle excellently summarized by scholars H. Tyler Blethen and Curtis W. Wood in *From Ulster to Carolina: The Migration of the Scotch-Irish to Southwestern North Carolina*:



FIGURE 1B. Sampler by a maker with the initials "IR"; Scotland; 18th century. Two-ply crewel on linen; HOA: 17 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", WOA: 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ ". *Private collection. Photograph courtesy of Curious Works Press, Greenville, SC.*

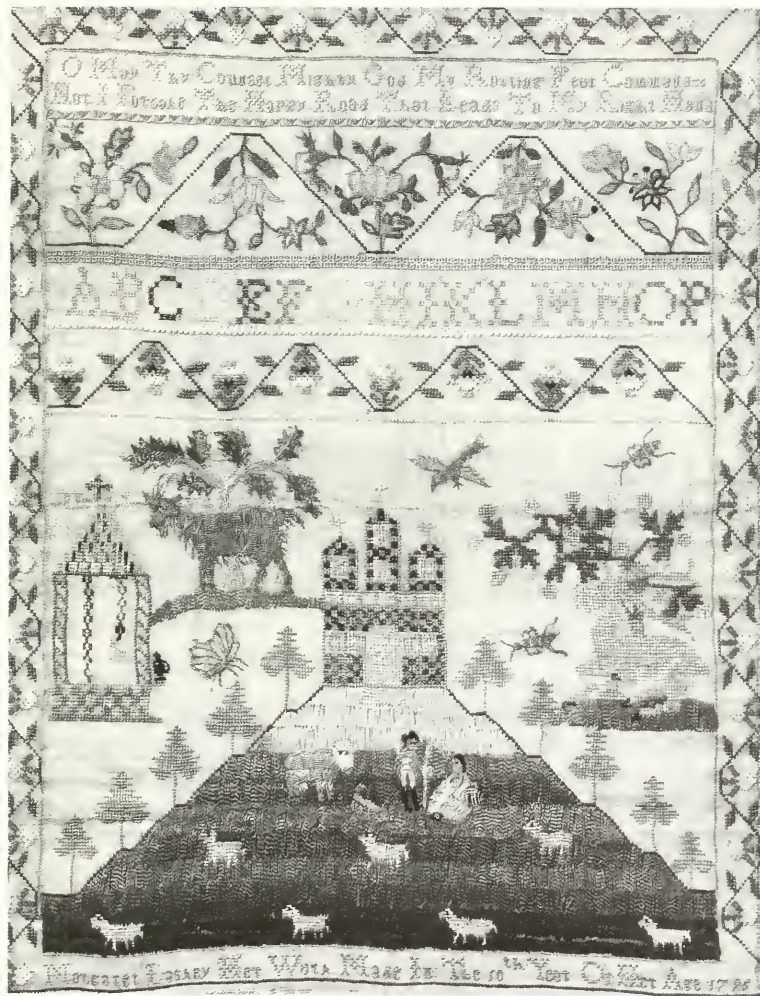


FIGURE 1C. English-style sampler displaying Germanic influence by Margaret Laskey; Philadelphia, PA (Mary Zeller's School); 1795. Silk thread on linen. Private collection. Photograph courtesy of M. Finkel & Daughter, Philadelphia, P.A.

The faith sustained in Scotland and Ulster insisted upon a highly trained clergy that met rigorous standards of intellectual achievement in the arts and sciences as well as theology. It encouraged a literate community of believers who could read the Scriptures for themselves. Church governance also emphasized connectionalism, an organizational structure through which each church was directly connected to and subject to the supervision of a presbytery . . . governed by a synod.⁷

The Presbyterian emphasis on well-educated clergy and a literate community led to the establishment of prestigious institutions such as Princeton College and Theological Seminary and the founding of schools on the frontier.⁸

In the mid-1700s thousands of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians migrated down the Great Philadelphia Wagon Road from southeastern Pennsylvania (Lancaster, Chester, and York counties) into the Carolina Piedmont.⁹ While many arrived first in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, other points of entry were through Wilmington, North Carolina, and Charleston, South Carolina. The progression of this settlement pattern can be traced by the location of Presbyterian meeting houses that marked the landscape along tributaries of the Catawba and Broad Rivers in what became Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, and York County, South Carolina.

The dominance of Presbyterians in the Carolina Piedmont and their emphasis on education provided a favorable climate for the establishment of academies for both males and females. Tracing Presbyterian settlement into the Carolinas reveals how supply, or itinerant, ministers were sent from the New York presbytery south into Mecklenburg County and neighboring York County. Those supply ministers provided a constant exchange of goods and services, including teachers, curriculum preferences, textbooks, school supplies, and—most important for this study—embroidery patterns.

The intention of Presbyterian clergy, many of whom were educated in Edinburgh and Glasgow, was to establish classical academies to prepare young men for entrance to universities and the ministry. In the Carolina Piedmont, female academies—where the curriculum in-

cluded embroidery—benefited from their Presbyterian male counterparts. Female academies were founded by clergymen but supported by their wives, who taught the female branches. Many of the clergy and their families, having lived in the North for a generation, had associations with academies in Philadelphia and New England. Young educated women migrating to the Carolina Piedmont with families or to teach attended Litchfield Female Academy (Connecticut), the Quaker Pleasant Valley School (New York), Bethlehem and Lititz Moravian Girls' Schools (Pennsylvania), and brought with them methods and preferences in curriculum, including needlework.

The earliest Scotch-Irish Presbyterian community in the Carolina Piedmont was established along the Waxhaw Creek of the Catawba River (*Figure 2*). Organized in 1752, the Waxhaw congregation initially met in a log structure known as the Waxhaw Meeting House on Rev. Robert Miller's plantation. Following the Presbyterian model of establishing schools, Miller conducted a Latin grammar school for boys until his departure in 1758. The second minister at Waxhaw, Rev. William Richardson, was married to Nancy Craighead Richardson, whose twelve-year-old daughter, Agnes Dunlap, from a second marriage, would make an early marking sampler, which will be discussed later.¹⁰

Like the Waxhaw church, Bethel Presbyterian Church (*Figure 3* and shown on the map in *Figure 2*) began as a preaching point but experienced disruptions from its beginning due to the Revolutionary War and then doctrinal division. Rev. William Richardson led the formation of Bethel Presbyterian Church out of the Waxhaw congregation in 1764. In 1819 the elders of Bethel Presbyterian Church organized Yorkville Female Academy in Yorkville, South Carolina. That same year the academy advertised academic and the following polite subjects: plain and ornamental needlework, embroidery, and filigree, with other fancy work.¹¹ Needlework became an important symbol of an educated lady and was often framed for display in the home.

FIGURE 2. Map of York, SC, and Mecklenburg and Lincoln Counties, NC. *Image courtesy of the Culture and Heritage Museums, York, SC.*

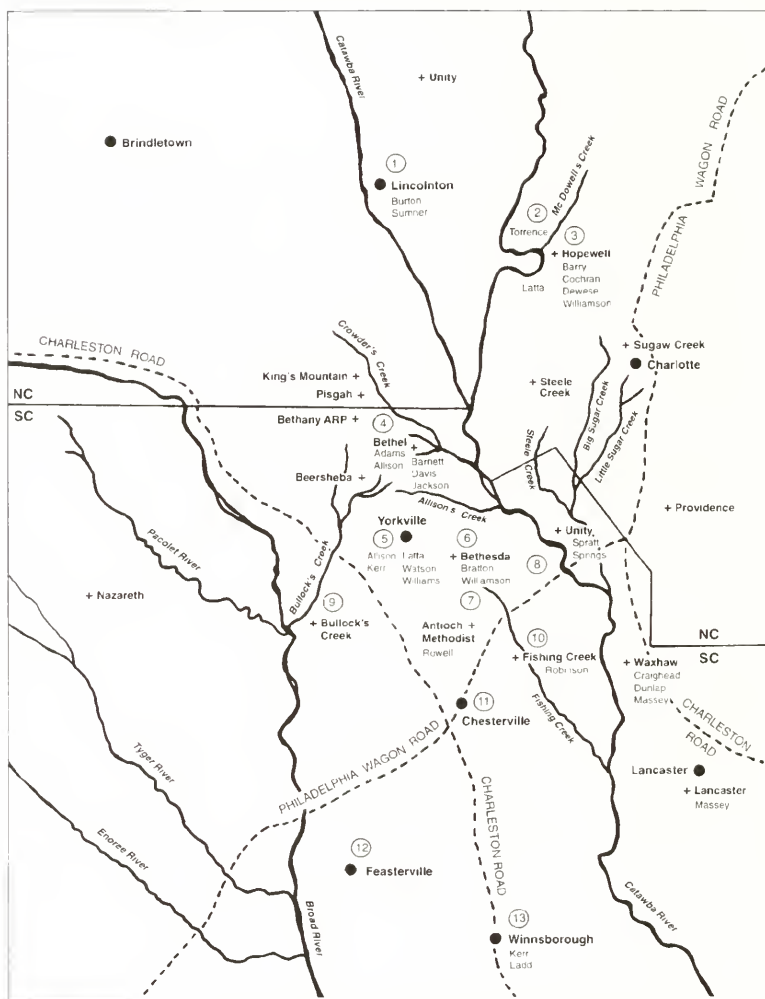




FIGURE 3. Bethel Presbyterian Church, Clover, SC. *Photograph by Todd Holben.*

YORKVILLE FEMALE ACADEMY

From the early period of the New Republic to the Civil War, the education of South Carolina women beyond basic reading and writing was limited to the children of the upper class.¹² The growth of the new nation brought with it an increase in female boarding schools. An educated daughter was considered an asset to her family; education enhanced her social status and improved her prospects for marriage. The education of women reinforced a national ideology termed the “cult of true womanhood” or “republican motherhood,” which placed the responsibility for children’s moral instruction on women.¹³

Local female academies, including Yorkville Female Academy, were established either in the homes of prominent citizens or in schools built by subscription. Beginning in the 1790s, elite southern female academies adopted the English course of study that was already offered in male academies. The male course of study included arithmetic, bookkeeping, geography, history, elocution, English grammar,

rhetoric, logic, and Greek and Latin.¹⁴ In the American South, a curriculum based on the classics remained a permanent feature, distinct from its northern counterparts. Female instructors added astronomy, botany, Latin and French, and ornamental branches, or “polite subjects” that included music, drawing and painting, and embroidery.¹⁵ In the South, instructors were often recruited from institutions in the North, the most noted of which were Emma Willard’s Troy Female Seminary (1821) in New York and Mary Lyon’s Mount Holyoke (1832) in Massachusetts. Fiscal stability of academies was a constant problem, resulting in a transience of both schools and teachers, partly accounting for the diverse needlework styles of the Carolina Piedmont.

Yorkville Female Academy was located in the home of a prominent lawyer, the showplace of Yorkville at that time, encompassing two town lots.^{16 17} A description of the school was printed in the August 1819 issue of the *Columbia Telescope*:

The building stands on a healthy, elevated and beautiful situation in a grove of forest timber containing 8 or 10 acres. It is airy and well lighted by large windows contains 8 spacious rooms and a fireplace in each room and is convenient to several springs of water and is well adapted for an academy and boarding house. It will afford convenient room for one hundred boarders besides the rooms appropriated for recitation and fancy work. . . . Since it commenced in January last, about 50 scholars have been entered and are now in school.

The newspaper account continued to describe the sole instructor, a Miss Usher, “a northern lady,” as highly esteemed, and that by the following fall a music teacher and assistants would be added to the school’s staff. Areas of study taught included scientific subjects, polite and useful learning, polishing, and strengthening morals. In 1823 the Bethel Presbyterian-sponsored academy offered academics, including astronomy, natural philosophy (physics), higher mathematics, as well as plain and ornamental needlework, painting, print work, embroidery, filigree, and other fancywork.

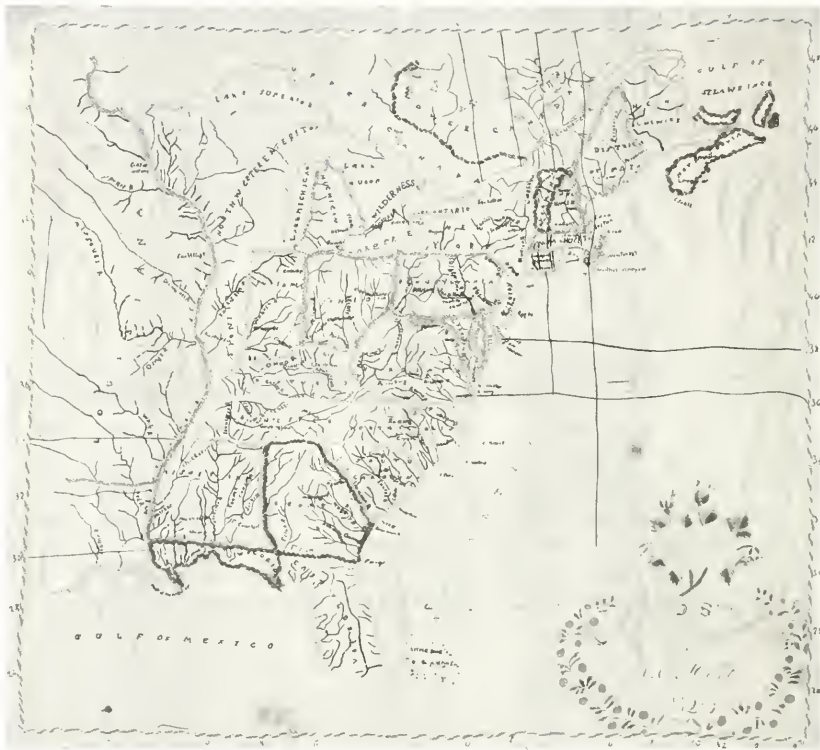
The teachers at Yorkville Female Academy were both hired locally and recruited from the North. By 1820 Miss Usher was joined by

Bethesda Presbyterian Church minister Rev. Robert B. Walker to teach the literary branches.¹⁸ Mrs. Obeyan, identified as a teacher or steward in 1822, purchased from the Chambers' store a pair of silver spectacles, a spectacles case and an ancient atlas for \$8.00. The teachers named in the 1822–23 academic year were Mrs. Chambers, Mrs. E. Swift (nee Eliza Wakeman) and Mrs. Swift's brother, Mr. James Wakeman.¹⁹ An advertisement claimed that books, stationery and other articles could be furnished *by the teachers* at New York retail prices.²⁰ This advertisement reveals that teachers were a direct means through which needlework designs likely were introduced from the North to the Carolina Piedmont.

Tracing the genealogy of the aforementioned instructors discloses a complex New York and Connecticut connection with the Yorkville school. "Miss Usher" could be Jerusha C. Usher, or someone related to her. Jerusha Usher was the wife of James Wakeman, one of the identified Yorkville instructors. The Usher and Wakeman/Grinnell families were from Chatham, Middlesex, Connecticut, and Balleston, New York.²¹ A "Miss Usher" has been documented as attending Sarah Pierce's Litchfield Female Seminary in 1807.²² James Wakeman's two sisters Nancy and Zilpha attended Litchfield in 1816. In addition, it is possible that Eliza Wakeman's husband Nathaniel Swift had female relations who also attended Litchfield. Several girls from New York and Connecticut with the Swift surname attended Litchfield in 1819. James Wakeman's first cousin, Silvia Grinnell, may be responsible for the strongest northern influence on a specific piece of needlework. Silvia attended the Quaker Pleasant Valley School in New York and while there created several map samplers in 1804.²³ Silvia could be the direct link to student Mary Elizabeth Hartt's 1820 map sampler (*Figure 4*) created while a student at Steel Creek Female School.²⁴

The *Western Carolinian* published that "an examination of the above school, under the direction of Miss Dorcas J. Alexander took place on the 2nd of Nov., at lower Steel-creek [Presbyterian] church, in York dist. S.C. . . ." ²⁵ Mary E. Hartt received an award for "Embroidery and Embroidered Maps." Mary E. Hartt lived with her cousin Elizabeth

FIGURE 4. Map sampler by Mary Elizabeth Hartt; York County, SC; 1820. Silk thread on silk; HOA: 20³/₁₆", WOA: 22¹/₁₆", MESDA Acc. 4977.1.



M. Spratt near Ft. Mill, South Carolina when both girls attended the Steel Creek Female School. However a surviving piece of Elizabeth's needlework is inscribed with Yorkville Female Academy, 1819.²⁶ Like many female schools, notices for Steel Creek Female Academy disappeared after one ad in 1820, whereas Yorkville Female Academy survived another decade.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY EMBROIDERY EXAMPLES
IN THE CAROLINA PIEDMONT

Female schools like Yorkville Female Academy proliferated in the nineteenth-century South, providing the daughters of well-to-do families with a choice of academic instruction and a course of refinement in needlework, music, and art.²⁷ While academy students had advantages of skilled instruction, sometimes resulting in accomplished needlework pieces like those by Mary Hartt and Elizabeth Spratt, other girls had instruction in the homes of educated women. An example from the eighteenth century is Agnes Dunlap. Agnes's mother, Nancy, had survived a controversy surrounding the death of her first husband, the Waxhaw congregation's minister Rev. William Richardson, in 1771. Sometime in or before 1778 she married Captain George Dunlap.^{28 29} In 1790 their twelve-year-old daughter, Agnes Dunlap, completed a marking sampler in brown and blue silk thread on linen (*Figure 5*).

A marking sampler was typically the first piece of needlework made by a girl, at an age as young as six. Sewn on even-weave linen with silk thread, the stitches were made over counted threads. The marking stitch is reversible and was used to mark linens and clothing with identifying initials. Other features of a marking sampler were rows of upper and lowercase alphabets divided by decorative bands of stitches. A decorative border might enclose the bands. An inspirational verse was sometimes stitched at the bottom with the maker's name and the date, as well as possibly the place or school and teacher. Agnes's sampler is worked in cross stitch with three rows of uppercase block letters in Algerian eyelet stitches, the latter being a feature of Scottish samplers.³⁰

Exemplifying Agnes's marking sampler are its rectangular shape with alphabet rows, dividing bands or decorative stitches, her name, age, date inscribed within a box, and a short verse. Her cross stitches are not reversible, reflecting the general trend away from marking stitches after the mid-eighteenth century. Agnes's sampler is notable for the unusual wrapped openwork just inside the hemmed edges, unique to the em-

broideries within this study. The significance of the three bold letters in black silk, “A,” “C,” and “M,” is a mystery, but could represent family members. Black thread initials like those on Agnes’s work were a feature of Scottish samplers to designate deceased family members.³¹ The square motif within the box could be the vestige of an embroidery pillow spot motif from the Dutch tradition. The verse, “*Virtue is a Juil*,” is a reminder that standardized spelling did not become common in America until after about 1820. The word “virtue” signified piety as a value in Agnes’s relationship with God and others.

Agnes’s is one of two known samplers from the Carolina Piedmont dating to the late 1700s, the other being the work of Mary C. Baldwin from Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, completed in 1786 (not illustrated).³² As early examples of the Presbyterian needlework tradition from the Backcountry, the Agnes Dunlap and Mary Baldwin samplers demonstrate that families provided elements of refinement in the education of their daughters before embroidery patterns and teachers from outside sources were readily available. The details of Agnes’s education are unknown; however it is possible that she received instruction by her mother or someone in the local community, an instruction that may have been sponsored by the church. Although no period needlework from Northern Ireland, Scotland, or Europe survive in the Bethel Group, first generation Bethel congregation females may have brought needlework with them and used these embroideries as sources of design.

PEGGY ALLISON SAMPLER AND
SALEM GIRLS’ BOARDING SCHOOL

While not considered one of the Bethel Group sampler makers, Margaret Malvinia “Peggy” Allison was a daughter of Bethel Church founders.³³ Sent to the Salem Girls’ Boarding School in North Carolina, Peggy stitched a Moravian-style sampler in 1808 that likely influenced subsequent needlework in the Bethel community through its style and the introduction of embroidery patterns to its schoolgirls



FIGURE 6. Sampler by Peggy Allison; Salem, NC; 1808. Silk thread on linen; HOA: 21⁵/₈", WOA: 22¹/₄". *Old Salem Museums & Gardens*, Acc. 4339.

(Figure 6).³⁴ Although Peggy received her education outside of York County, circumstantial and documentary evidence suggest that she returned home and instructed girls from Bethel at local academies. Her sampler possibly provided a source of design for other pieces of needlework in the Bethel Group. As a schoolgirl in the New Republic South, Peggy's experience provides an account of how daughters of the plantation class from York County were educated and led their

lives. As a daughter from a privileged Presbyterian family, her influence would have been substantial in the local female community.

Peggy was born in 1794, the fourth child of Dr. John Allison, a physician of means, and Elizabeth Hill, daughter of the successful ironmaster, Col. William Hill, founder of Hills Iron Works on Allison Creek in York County. The circumstances of Peggy's life proved tragic, but not uncommon. The untimely death of her parents in 1804 and 1805 left ten-year-old Peggy and her five siblings orphaned. Estate records show that neighbor John Currence was paid for boarding the Allison children.³⁵

As stipulated in Dr. Allison's will, the education of his five minor children was to be accomplished "in such a manner as may be convenient and appear suitable and pay for the same out of any monies that may be remaining of any estates."³⁶ At age fourteen, Peggy and a younger sister, Adeline, were sent to the Salem Girls' Boarding School, staying from 1808 to 1810. Their school expense account of \$630.67 in June 1808 was paid out of their father's estate by executor Judge William Smith. An entry dated 24 May 1810 from the estate settlement, "in going to and returning from Salem for the Miss Allisons" amounted to \$17.50. The names of James Latta and William McCaw were also on the Allison Salem accounts.³⁷ James Latta's eleven-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, and Pamela McCaw, thirteen years, of York District, were classmates of the Allison sisters at Salem. Along with the sampler, a music book and several watercolor paintings survive as examples of Peggy's ornamental accomplishments.³⁸ There is no surviving needlework by her sister Adeline or schoolmates Elizabeth Latta or Pamela McCaw.

Worked during her first year in attendance at Salem, both the motifs and their random arrangement seen in Peggy's sampler are typical of pieces accomplished at the Moravian school. The well, wreath cartouche, oak tree, and stylistic vases of flowers all were motifs favored by Moravian needlework teachers and were part of the common vocabulary of sampler making from German and Dutch embroidery traditions. Some of the motifs had religious connotations. The image of

a well referred to the Biblical story of the woman at the well.³⁹ Some samplers included the figure of the woman. The oak tree, or tree of life, may include representations of Adam and Eve. German pattern books were printed for embroidery use as early as 1520.⁴⁰ Philadelphia samplers from the Federal period that were made under German instruction display clear examples of German patterns. One such example is Margaret Laskey's sampler completed at Mary Zeller's school (*Figure 1b*).⁴¹

In 1808, a Salem classmate of Peggy's, Rachel Clark, used many of the same motifs in her sampler (*Figure 7*): the well, the wreath cartouche, a tree of life, and flower vases and baskets. Compared to Peggy's embroidery, Rachel's work is denser. She filled her space with a recumbent stag, plinth, flower sprigs and vases, and a house. Sister Dorothea Reichel taught needlework at Salem in 1808 and may have instructed Rachel and Peggy.⁴² Copies from a pattern book or individual patterns may have been used by the students under Dorothea Reichel's instruction and could have returned with Peggy and her sampler to York County. A letter of 1836 sent from Salem student Jane Elizabeth Torrence to her parents in Mecklenburg County apologized that she "forgot to send Mrs. Williamson the *needlework pattern book* as she requested."⁴³ The importance of the transfer of these motifs to York County is pivotal to the discussion of the Bethel Group, especially Jane Meek Adams's 1828 embroidery (*Figure 8*), to be discussed later.

The practice of sending Presbyterian girls to a Moravian school was not unusual. The excellent reputation of Salem's Girls' Boarding School spread rapidly and it became a temporary home to more than several girls whose fathers or guardians sought security and education for motherless children.⁴⁴⁻⁴⁵ At Salem, proselytizing was not promoted, but boarding students were instructed in essential Christian doctrines, encouraged to learn hymns and to recite the catechism—all fully Presbyterian values.⁴⁶ During the antebellum period, over one hundred fifty girls from York County, South Carolina and Lincoln and Mecklenburg Counties, North Carolina attended Salem. After two years of schooling, Peggy and her sister departed Salem. It is probable they lived with their sister Jane Latta or other relatives.



FIGURE 7. Sampler by Rachel Clark; Salem, NC; 1806–08. Silk thread on linen; HOA: 21", WOA: 22". Private collection. Photograph courtesy of the Culture and Heritage Museums, York, SC.

In 1819, at the age of twenty-five, Peggy wed a man nineteen years her senior, Henry G. Smith of York County.⁴⁷ Henry was the manager of the Latta dry goods store in Columbia, South Carolina, a partner of Peggy's brother-in-law, Robert Latta.⁴⁸ A year later Peggy was widowed.⁴⁹ Given the circumstances, it is possible that Peggy's marriage was arranged or encouraged by her in-laws, the Lattas. Peggy lost her oldest sister Jane Allison Latta shortly after her marriage to Henry Smith. Her brother-in-law Robert Latta married Eliza Dilworth, a

FIGURE 8. Sampler
by Jane Meek Adams;
York County, SC;
1828. Silk thread on
linen; HOA: 21", WOA:
22½". Private collection.
*Photograph courtesy of the
Culture and Heritage Mu-
seums, York, SC.*



Quaker from Philadelphia. Latta and his new wife built a three-story brick residence and store between 1824 and 1828. Eliza Dilworth Latta's move to Yorkville opened another door of possible introduction of the latest needlework patterns and trends from Philadelphia. The influence of needlework from Philadelphia instructresses also could have been transferred by Robert and Jane Latta's daughter Jane (Peggy Allison's niece), who attended an elite school in Philadelphia, Mrs. Bazeley's Select Seminary. Jane Latta completed her pictorial needlework in silk on linen entirely in cross stitch (*Figure 9*).⁵⁰ It may have been

intended as a memorial to her mother; the source was likely a print. Perhaps Eliza and Robert Latta placed his daughter Jane's needle picture and her portrait in their new house in Yorkville as a remembrance after her early death and burial in Philadelphia in 1824.

On 28 June 1837, at age forty-three, Peggy Allison married as her second husband John Springs, a wealthy planter and merchant from York County and a Presbyterian of the Dutch Reformed Church. A widower himself with five of nine children still living, Springs knew Peggy through her first husband Henry Smith.⁵¹ ⁵² Six weeks after their marriage, Peggy died of a fever.⁵³ ⁵⁴

The transfer of Moravian needlework motifs to the Bethel community most likely came through Peggy. It is possible that Peggy taught ornamental subjects at a Presbyterian academy near Bethel Church or at a female academy in Yorkville during her widowhood from 1820 to 1837.⁵⁵ It was common practice at the time for widows who were educated to turn to teaching as a socially acceptable means of support.⁵⁶



FIGURE 9. Embroidered picture by Jane Latta; Philadelphia: 1822. Silk thread on linen; HOA: 18½", WOA: 20". Collection of Historic Latta Plantation. Photograph courtesy of Historic Latta Plantation, Inc., Huntersville, NC.

Although only two samplers from the early settlement of the Carolina Piedmont period are known, over thirty schoolgirl embroideries from York County and the surrounding area completed between 1819 and 1865 are known to survive.⁵⁷ The eight York County samplers that have been identified as the Bethel Group were worked by daughters and granddaughters of Presbyterian clerical families and their congregations of Bethel Presbyterian Church.

Seven of the known Bethel samplers remained with the families of their origin, likely a significant factor in their survival. The Bethel girls were not only siblings or cousins to each other, but also were related to Rev. James S. Adams and his nephew Rev. Samuel L. Watson, who served sequential terms as ministers of Bethel Presbyterian Church from 1811 to 1882. The sampler makers ranged in age from seven to thirty at the time the samplers were finished, with fifteen being the average age. Worked over a forty-one-year period and three generations, the embroideries exhibit diverse design styles. Despite their differences, similarities exist in the choice of motifs, stitches, alphabet styles, and colors of silk thread. The teachers or schools responsible for instructing the makers have yet to be identified.

Jane Meek Adams Sampler

Jane Meek Adams is the first sampler maker in the Bethel Group.⁵⁸ She was born in York County on 18 August 1817, the second daughter of William Adams and Rebecca Hope. Ancestors of both the Adams and Barnett families were founding members of the Bethel Presbyterian Church congregation. Jane married Alexander Hamilton Barnett, her first cousin, in December 1840; she bore him eleven children.⁵⁹ According to family history, Jane attended Yorkville Female Academy. Although her name does not appear in an existing ledger of school accounts from 1822 to 1824 it is possible that she attended after 1824.⁶⁰ If Jane were a student in Yorkville, then her sampler dated 1828 (*Figure 8*) would be one of four known schoolgirl works attributed to that acad-

emy. The other three include a painting on silk and two needlework pieces.^{61 62}

Finishing her sampler in 1828, Jane dedicated the work, in stitches, to the memory of her mother who had died in 1824. In spite of the Moravian characteristics of her needlework, Jane did not attend Salem Girls' Boarding School. A comparison with embroideries by Salem students Peggy Allison (*Figure 6*) and Rachel Clark (*Figure 7*) reveals the use of the same motifs: the well, plinth, wreath cartouche, oak tree, vases of flowers, baskets, and a Sibmacher recumbent stag.⁶³ Jane and Peggy used the same pattern of flowers in a large vase, stitched to the right of the wreath cartouche. This vase is found in German pattern books and is also documented on German band samplers of the mid-eighteenth century (*Figure 10*).⁶⁴ Jane's sampler, however, has more similarities with Rachel Clark's sampler. Jane could have copied these German designs seen on Rachel's sampler from patterns used by Peggy Allison. She would not have had access to Rachel Clark's sampler only ten years after its completion: Rachel lived east of Charlotte in Richmond County, North Carolina. Another detail from Jane's piece, the horizontal grape vine band, is reminiscent of the grape vine on Elizabeth Stine's 1793 sampler stitched under German instruction in Mary Zeller's Philadelphia school.⁶⁵

It is evident on examination of Jane's and Peggy's samplers that Jane's work, accomplished twenty years after Peggy's and at an earlier age, displays a higher quality of stitching than her predecessor. Jane used a fine piece of linen with an irregular thread count of 38 by 44 threads per inch, stitched cross and Algerian eye with a full palette of colors in silk, filled her sampler with well-spaced, balanced motifs, inscribed a verse inside

FIGURE 10. Band sampler; Germany; 1738. Linen plain weave embroidered in silk; HOA: 42¹/₂", WOA: 10¹/₄". *Collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, acc. 38.1144; Photograph © 2008 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.*



the wreath-cartouche and personalized her embroidery with a memorial to her mother and a two-story, raised house indicating possible vernacular architecture.⁶⁶ Analysis of Jane's sampler signals that she received careful instruction, that she had access to German patterns, that she likely consulted the Allison sampler as an example, and that she may have begun her work as early as 1824, completing it in 1828.

Peggy Allison was living in York County in 1827, and given her financial situation as a widow, it is possible she was an instructress at the Yorkville academy.⁶⁷ Peggy would have been thirty-three years of age in 1827 and Jane would have been a ten-year-old student. Since girls attended school for short time periods, perhaps Jane's needlework was begun under formal instruction and later coached by Peggy toward its completion. Both of them were from Bethel Presbyterian Church families, meaning that their acquaintance and exchange of embroidery patterns could also have been in an informal manner.

The influence of the northern teachers at Yorkville Female Academy and Steel-Creek Female School⁶⁸ must also be considered in regard to Jane's sampler. Students of Litchfield Female Academy produced mostly silk on silk embroideries and painting, like the anonymous "Morning Mama" piece (not illustrated).⁶⁹ Students at the Quaker Pleasant Valley School produced works in silk like Mary Hartt's 1820 map sampler (*Figure 4*), but also favored motifs of the German and Dutch tradition. The previously mentioned teachers from New York could have introduced these patterns at Yorkville Female Academy and Steel-Creek Female School.

Some needlework teachers at Yorkville Female Academy in the 1820s may have had Moravian or German instruction, whether they were local girls or girls from the North.⁷⁰

Bethel Group sampler makers favored some of the German and Dutch motifs for the next thirty years. Among Pennsylvania Germans, samplers were considered to reflect the "maker, her family and her community." Thus, samplers made by members of the extended family were consulted as a girl proceeded with her own work.⁷¹ It appears that a similar situation existed among the Scotch-Irish Presbyte-

rians of York County, where existing needlework was consulted when a younger female relative began her work, perhaps at seasonal church meetings described below.

“The Scottish practice of preparatory services and the communion season was brought to America . . . It was the occasion for receiving church members, catechizing, baptisms and congregational meetings. In rural situations the communion season made possible a form of church life that could not otherwise be sustained in geographically dispersed congregations with poor travel conditions.”⁷² For women these occasions of joint congregational gatherings provided important opportunities to socialize, share experiences in domestic affairs and travel, express religious feelings and compare instruction, including ornamental needlework designs.

Frances Sermiramis Clinton Sampler

Frances Sermiramis Clinton was born in York County, South Carolina, the daughter of Joseph Clinton and Mary Barnett. Her grandfather Capt. Peter Clinton, fought in the Revolutionary War. Frances, who never married, stayed in the Bethel community throughout her life. In 1813, the year she was born, the congregation at Bethel Church began their first period of stability under one minister, Rev. James S. Adams, who would be the pastor for twenty-nine years. As first cousins, Frances Clinton and Jane Meek Adams were nieces of Rev. Adams.

The importance of the Clinton family’s relationship to the Adams is that it relates them to the Watson, Jackson, and Barnett families. The Adams, Watsons, and Barnetts supplied the minister and teachers for Bethel Presbyterian Church and its surrounding community from 1811 to the end of the nineteenth century. The Watsons, Adams, and Williamsons, the latter was another York County family of Presbyterian ministers, at the same time supplied the pulpit for Steele Creek and Hopewell Presbyterian Churches in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, and New Hope and Olney Presbyterian Churches in Lincoln County, North Carolina. Enhanced by such a kinship network,

women had opportunities of academic instruction that included needlework. This instruction was at times accomplished in the homes of neighbors where the needlework of family and community members likely were consulted and considered as they stitched individual pieces. Between 1840 and 1847 seventeen active academies located at Bethel Presbyterian Church and on properties of the Barnett family were recorded by the South Carolina Commission on Free Schools. Mrs. Barnett's home was the location for an academy in 1842, with E. Salmon as the teacher.⁷³

In September 1827 at age fourteen, Frances S. Clinton completed a marking sampler (*Figure 11*), signifying it as the earliest dated sampler of the Bethel Group. Stitched in cross and Algerian eye in silk thread, Frances's sampler displays a plain style of embroidering popular with schoolgirls throughout Europe and America in the second and third decades of the 1800s. Her sampler marks the beginning of a trend in Bethel Group samplers: using the eyelet stitch for upper case alphabets. Rebecca Quinton found that Scottish samplers favored eyelet for the larger alphabets.⁷⁴ Similarities with Jane Meek Adams's work (*Figure 8*) are the use of German/Dutch style baskets, a pair of facing birds, and a strawberry vine border. Given their ages and kinship, and the fact that they were both residing within several miles of Bethel Church, it could be that Jane Meek Adams's needlework was in progress at her home when Frances began her work, using the same pattern sources. Girls commonly made a marking sampler as a learning piece prior to more challenging embroidery projects. Although Frances was four years older than Jane, her needle skills do not compare favorably to Jane's fine stitching. This fact may be attributed to Jane's natural talent, or to her attendance at a school under accomplished instruction.

Comparing the Jane Meek Adams and Frances S. Clinton samplers to the remaining embroideries of the Bethel Group, some conclusions about regional preferences can be made. After Jane's and Frances's samplers, schoolgirls of the Bethel community showed a preference for the English style of sampler design—that is, the works are orga-

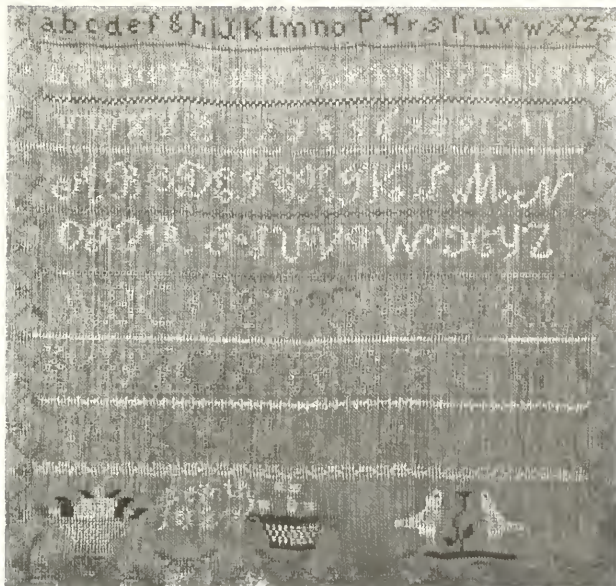


FIGURE 11. Sampler by Frances S. Clinton; York County, SC; 1827. Silk thread on linen. *Collection of the South Carolina State Museum. Photograph courtesy of the South Carolina State Museum, Columbia, SC.*

nized within a nearly square shape with alphabets in horizontal rows or bands separated by rows of stitches in a horizontal pattern. The later samplers often include an inscription with the maker's name, date, and a verse below the alphabets along with geometrical shapes, flowers, baskets, animals, or buildings organized around or below the verse. The work may be bordered on all or several sides with a continuous pattern of flowers, vines, or geometric designs. This style is distinct from the German tradition of samplers with randomly scattered spot motifs, fewer alphabets and inscriptions, no borders, and lacking verses.⁷⁵

Jackson Family Embroidery

Female members of the extended Jackson family (*Figures 12 and 12a*) contributed the largest number of samplers to the Bethel Group. Unlike other Scotch-Irish families in the Bethel community, the Jacksons did not immigrate through Philadelphia, nor did they live in Pennsylvania for two generations. David and Mary Morrison Jackson arrived in York County directly from Antrim, Northern Ireland, through the port of Wilmington, North Carolina, by 1770. They arrived in York County sometime before 1780. Because the Jackson family did not experience acculturation in Pennsylvania, the embroideries created by their daughters exhibit a strong continuation of Scotch-Irish culture.

According to family tradition, Jane McEwen Jackson completed an unsigned sampler in 1843 (*Figure 13*), possibly with the help of her older sibling, Mary Morrison Jackson.⁶ This is the only Bethel Group



FIGURE 12. Photograph of the William Jackson family; York County, SC; 19th century. *Private collection.*

THE JACKSON FAMILY OF
YORK COUNTY, SC



FIGURE 12A. Jackson family genealogy chart. *Courtesy of the author.*

sampler worked in worsted yarn rather than silk thread, and the use of bright red, green, mustard, brown, and pink wools suggests a Scottish influence: samplers worked in Scotland between the late-seventeenth and early-nineteenth centuries are noted for bright colors, greens and reds especially, and many of them were embroidered in worsted rather than silk thread.⁷⁷ This is the only Bethel Group sampler lacking uppercase alphabets worked in eyelet stitch, a technique identified by



FIGURE 13. Sampler by Jane McEwen Jackson, possibly with the assistance of Mary Morrison Jackson; York County, SC; 1843. Worsted yarn thread on linen; HOA: 17 $\frac{1}{4}$ "", WOA: 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". *Private collection. Photograph courtesy of the Culture and Heritage Museums, York, SC.*

Rebecca Quinton as popular on Scottish embroidery.⁷⁸ In addition, many Scottish samplers feature Dutch motifs, hinting at the strong religious and economic relationships between the two countries. The Dutch influence on this sampler can be seen in the striped tulip motif at center top.

When the sampler was completed, Jane McEwen Jackson was twenty years old and Mary Morrison Jackson was thirty. The sisters may have taught at a local academy and made the sampler as a teaching model, possibly accounting for the use of six different stitches—cross,

alternate back, half queen and variation, rice, and Roman—the greatest variety of stitches found on any of the Bethel Group samplers. Conversely, the sisters may have simply desired to continue the family needlework tradition. It is possible that their sampler was patterned after one that “came across the waters.”⁷⁹ The sampler motifs are unlike those of the other Jackson samplers, but a similar pictorial pattern found in the lower section is seen on an 1842 family record sampler from Mecklenburg County (*Figure 14*).⁸⁰

The grape-leaf border on Jane’s and Mary’s sampler shares structural similarities with the horizontal grape-leaf band on the sampler worked by Jane Meek Adams (*Figure 8*). A second adaptation from the Jane Meek Adams sampler can also be seen in the horizontal leafy sprigs that border both sides of the flower basket. This sprig is part of the wreath cartouche of both Peggy Allison’s (*Figure 6*) and Jane Meek Adams’s work, as well as of the cartouches on the two samplers discussed in the section on Nancy Hannah Stowe below (*Figures 17 and 18*).

The correlation between the work of Jane and Mary Jackson and Jane Meek Adams might be found through their younger sister, Elizabeth Davidson Jackson, who was related by marriage to Jane Meek Adams.⁸¹ A sampler dated 31 May 1831 (*Figure 15*) was begun by Elizabeth when she was fifteen years old but she died before completing her work.⁸² While Elizabeth’s embroidery does not correlate stylistically with Jane Meek Adams’s (*Figure 8*), their works share the same leafy border surround and a zigzag patterned band like that of Rachel Clark (*Figure 7*). In 1931 Elizabeth’s great-niece, Martha E. Jackson Curry, completed the embroidery, inscribing the words “FINISHED THIS SAMPLER” and including her name and the date in cotton thread. Martha also added pink flowers to the leafy vine border as well as the letters “T” through “Z” in the center alphabet. Highlighting the pervasive manner in which cultural traditions are silently passed through generations of a family, Martha E. Jackson Curry did not recall consulting a pattern in placing the flowers along the leafy vine border, nor did she know of the existence of the Jane Meek Adams sampler.⁸³

FIGURE 14. Sampler by Sarah M. Lucky; Mecklenburg County, NC; 1842. Silk thread on linen. *Private collection.*

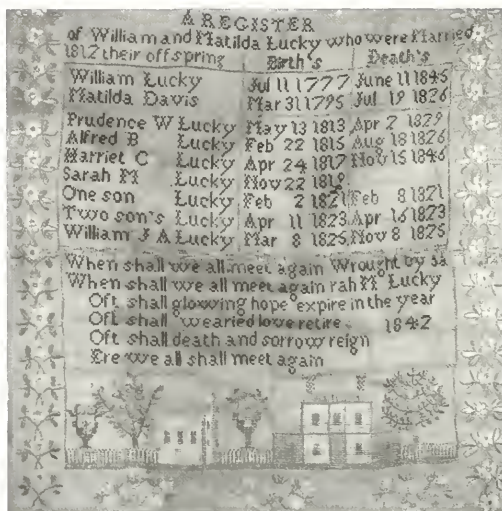
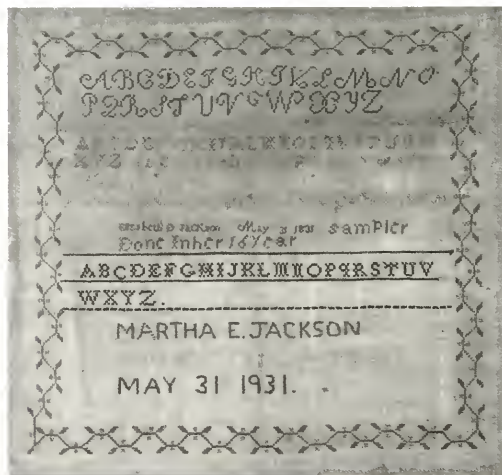


FIGURE 15. Sampler by Elizabeth Davidson Jackson; York County, SC; 1831 (completed in 1931 by Martha E. Jackson Curry). Silk and cotton thread on linen; HOA: 17 $\frac{1}{4}$ " WOA: 18". *Private collection. Photograph courtesy of the Culture and Heritage Museums, York, SC.*



Nancy Hannah Stowe Sampler and Related Embroidery

Nancy Hannah Stowe's grandparents were members of the Bethel congregation that formed New Hope Presbyterian Church in Lincoln County, North Carolina, in 1794.⁸⁴ It is probable that she attended a Presbyterian-sponsored academy because her uncle, Rev. Samuel Watson, was the minister at New Hope and Steel Creek churches.⁸⁵ For its first forty years, Nancy's church in New Hope did not have a minister exclusive to its members, but Presbyterian academies only five to ten miles away were available in the Steel Creek community, at Bethel Church and in Yorkville.⁸⁶

Nancy's sampler (*Figure 16*) was completed in 1834 when she was seven years old, making her the youngest sampler maker recorded in the Bethel Group.⁸⁷ Her silk threads of ecru, yellow, pink, and green made stitches of cross, Algerian eye, and eyelet. The undulating straw-

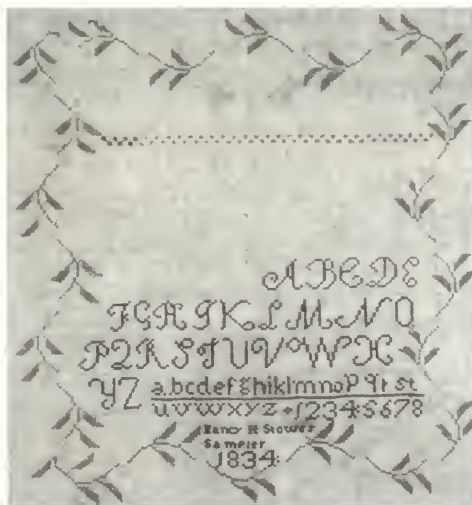


FIGURE 16. Sampler by Nancy Hannah Stowe; Lincoln County, NC; 1834. Silk thread on linen. Private collection.

FIGURE 17. Sampler by Jane A. Jackson; York County, SC; 1848. Silk thread on linen; HOA: 17¹/₂" , WOA: 17¹/₄". *Collection of the Culture and Heritage Museums, Inc. 1991.024.050. Photograph courtesy of the Culture and Heritage Museums, York, SC.*



berry vine border is of special concern, because it also appears on samplers made fourteen years later by Jackson family sisters Jane Adams Jackson and Susan Elizabeth Jackson (*Figures 17 and 18*). The Jackson family tradition of using a leafy, meandering border continued at least into the 1890s through Susan Jackson's daughter Addie, who incorporated the pattern in her hand-drawn designs for embellishments on clothing such as collars (*Figure 19*). These examples employing similar borders clearly illustrate the transference of embroidery design among the Bethel community homes and academies.^{88 89}

The Stowe and Jackson undulating three-leaflet or bud vine border design possibly was derived from the same pattern sources as those appearing on some Moravian and Quaker needlework. In 1831 Aletheia

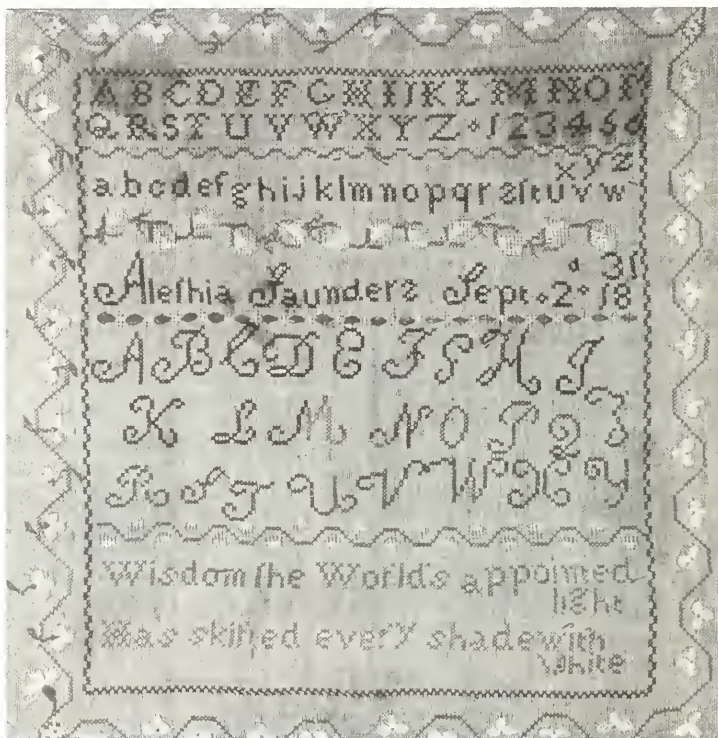


FIGURE 18. Sampler by Susan E. Jackson; York County, SC; 1848. Silk thread on linen; HOA: 17¹/₂" , WOA: 18¹/₂". *Private collection. Photograph courtesy of the Culture and Heritage Museums, York, SC.*



FIGURE 19. Collar embroidery pattern by Addie Jackson; York County, SC; ca. 1898. *Private collection. Photograph by Bill Curry.*

FIGURE 20. Sampler by Alethia Sa[un]ders; Tennessee; 1831. *Collection of Historic Rock Castle, Sumner County, TN. Photograph by Jennifer Core, Tennessee Sampler Survey.*



Saunders of Tennessee completed a sampler with a trailing vine border (Figure 20). Alethia's sister Letitia was the first girl from Tennessee to attend Salem Girls' Boarding School in 1805. Although there is no surviving needlework attributed to Letitia, in 1806 Juliana Caroline Vierling, a Salem Moravian, stitched a sampler with the same trailing vine border at the sides and top (not illustrated).⁹⁰ An 1828 Ohio sampler by a Quaker girl Mary Jane Bonsall (Figure 20a) exhibits a comparable un-

dulating vine border design at the top and bottom. The Stowe-Jackson border may be an original adaptation of a strawberry pattern created by a teacher, possibly inspired by a native plant like the Strawberry-bush (*Euonymus americana*) or by the Clover Meander pattern from the German tradition on an 1840 sampler made in Northern Ireland by Maria McBurney (not illustrated).⁹¹ As Margaret Swain observed about needlework, "Design did not change suddenly at the beginning of each century. It did not, indeed, change so rapidly as we are apt to imagine, for it was often copied from a picture or a book made fifty years earlier."⁹²

The work on Jane's and Susan's samplers (*Figures 17 and 18*) is tied stylistically to the embroideries of Peggy Allison (*Figure 6*) and Jane Meek Adams (*Figure 8*) through the wreath cartouches. This motif was identified by researchers Tandy and Charles Hersh as having its origins in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dutch and German

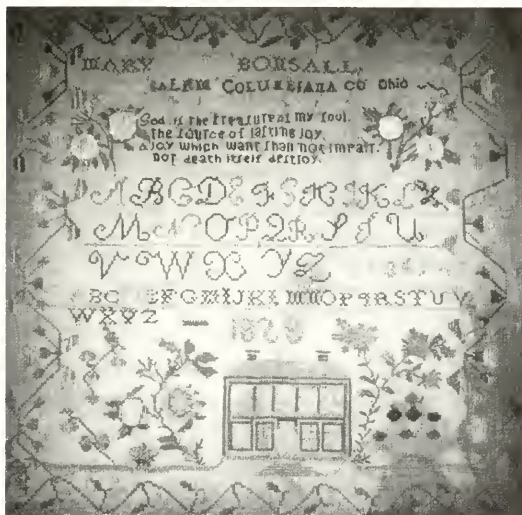


FIGURE 20A. Sampler by Mary Jane Bonsall; Ohio; 1828. *Private collection. Photograph courtesy of Richard Studebaker.*

samplers. It was also found as early as 1794 on Pennsylvania samplers. The Hershes have noted that this wreath form, originally a circle, was adapted to an oval and pulled apart to create linear borders.⁹³ The use of the wreath cartouche in Northern Ireland is illustrated by Mary Beck of County Down, Northern Ireland who inscribed her name and the date, March 1832, inside a wreath cartouche on her sampler wrought in worsted yarn (not illustrated).⁹⁴

Jane's and Susan's samplers have three identical upper case alphabets using Algerian eyelet for the first upper case set. The group of letters located at lower right on both samplers—"ACCDQW"—is worked in a style found on some Quaker samplers.⁹⁵ This alphabet form, with its doubled outlines, is first seen in Dutch samplers.⁹⁶ Heather M. Crawford has observed the use of this alphabet in samplers of Northern Ireland: "When an ornate capital alphabet was required in local work this design, which is of German origin, was usually the first choice . . . The same design has been recorded in pieces known to have been stitched by Quaker children in Ireland, who often paired it with an elegant Roman alphabet."⁹⁷ A complete alphabet in this style appears on Jane Meek Adams's sampler as well (*Figure 8*).

Amanda Jane Davis Sampler

The last sampler identified as part of the Bethel Group, from the hand of Amanda Jane Davis and dated 10 August 1849 (*Figure 21*), exhibits no decorative motifs, but was made as a marking sampler. The date on the sampler, September 1849, is significant because it is the same year that Amanda became a communicant at Bethel Presbyterian Church, at age twenty. The numerals "13" to the right of the date may signify that she began the sampler at age thirteen but was motivated to complete it just before she joined the church.⁹⁸

Unlike Agnes Dunlap's marking sampler (*Figure 5*) worked predominantly in cross stitches, Amanda's sampler, in addition to cross stitches, included eyelet, four-sided, and queen stitches. In the second band of her work, Amanda reversed the order of her name to "Jane A. Davis" in order to fit the letters in the space remaining.⁹⁹

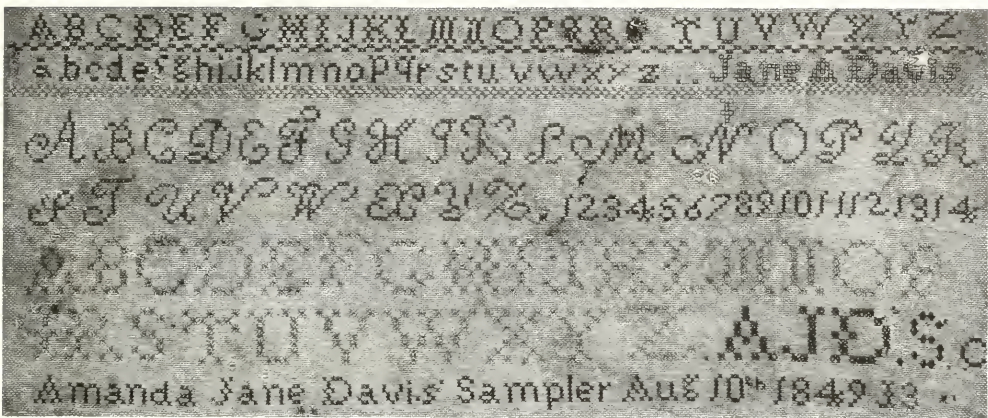


FIGURE 21. Sampler by Amanda J. Davis; York County, SC; 1849. Silk thread on cotton; HOA: 81 $\frac{1}{4}$ " , WOA: 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Private collection. Photograph courtesy of the Culture and Heritage Museums, York, SC.

BETHEL GROUP CONCLUSIONS

Antebellum needlework of the Carolina Piedmont was a creative expression for those women whose southern rural culture was centered on Scotch-Irish kinship and Presbyterian churches. The surviving embroideries from York County and the surrounding area demonstrate the variety of possible regional influences on the daughters of Presbyterian families through northern instructors at their local academies, enrollment in Salem's Girls' Boarding School, and their shared Scotch-Irish heritage and dedication to church and school.

The Yorkville Female Academy hired northern teachers whose influence brought refinement in female education. Much like the goods and supplies imported from the North, as "zealous missionaries of the cult of true womanhood," northern women teaching in the South "reinforced and reinvigorated the ideal of the lady."¹⁰⁰ The influence of teachers trained and recruited from northern female academies partly

accounts for the variety of styles and the quality of embroidery in the Bethel Group but it did not produce a single, recognizable style of needlework in the region.¹⁰¹ The eight embroideries of the Bethel Group vary in style, motifs, and quality of work, and each expresses an individuality and creative freedom that distinguishes them from the template designs of northern professional embroideries that were products of ecclesiastical schools and select finishing schools.

Without an identifiable influence from northern instructors, a European tradition might be expected through the instruction of local girls sent to the Moravian Salem Girls' Boarding School. Surprisingly, the Bethel Group samplers do not display a uniform design associated with the German and Dutch sampler traditions, although the Bethel Group samplers do display some popular motifs from those traditions. A Northern European needlework influence was also present in Northern Ireland, and the Bethel Group samplers could reflect their makers' Scotch-Irish ancestry in Ulster.

The Scotch-Irish women of the Carolina Piedmont, particularly the Jackson family of Bethel Presbyterian Church, also remembered their ties to Scotland through embroideries that used black letter initials for deceased family members (Agnes Dunlap [Figure 5]), the use of worsted yarn and bright colors like green, gold and red (Jane M. Jackson [Figure 13]), a preference for the eyelet stitch in uppercase alphabets (on all the samplers), and the use of verses to reinforce Presbyterian views of how one lives the Christian life (Susan E. Jackson [Figure 18] and Jane M. Jackson [Figure 13]).¹⁰²

In the end, the most consistent cultural characteristic revealed in the Bethel Group samplers is an allegiance to their Scotch-Irish Presbyterian ancestry. The families of the girls and women that made the Bethel Group samplers placed an importance on education within the resources of their religious community, often relying on a close network of educated clergy to provide teachers and curriculum.

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NOTES

1. Portions of this essay were previously published: Patricia V. Veasey, "Virtue Leads and Grace Reveals: The Bethel Group of Samplers of York County, South Carolina," *Sampler and Antique Needlework Quarterly*, October 2002: 50–57; Patricia V. Veasey, *Virtue Leads and Grace Reveals: Embroideries and Education in Antebellum South Carolina* (Greenville, SC: Curious Works Press, 2003), a catalog for an exhibition of the same name at the Museum of York County, Rock Hill, SC, March–July 2003.

2. The samplers of Northern Ireland were first studied by Heather M. Crawford, *Needlework Samplers of Northern Ireland: Patterns and History* (Crawfordsburn, Co. Down, Northern Ireland: Allingham, 1989).

3. They favored classical studies, moral instruction, and usefulness to society for both men and women. Christie Ann Farnham, *The Education of the Southern Belle: Higher Education and Student Socialization in the Antebellum South* (New York: New York University Press, 1994). In documenting the evolution of institutions of higher learning for females in the South, Farnham noted that well-established seminaries and academies became colleges that still exist today. For example, Yorkville Female Academy (1819) became Yorkville Female College by 1851; Augusta Female Academy (1842, Staunton, VA) became Mary Baldwin College; and Tennent's Log School House evolved into New Jersey College that became Princeton University and Theological Seminary.

4. The term Scotch-Irish is a vernacular term used, not only in America, but also in England beginning in the eighteenth century. For further discussion, see Michael C. Scoggins, "The Historical Use of the Term 'Scotch-Irish'" (York, SC: York County Historical Center, November 2001).

5. H. Tyler Blethen and Curtis W. Wood Jr., *From Ulster to Carolina: The Migration of the Scotch-Irish to Southwestern North Carolina*, rev. ed. (Raleigh, NC: NCDHCR, Division of Archives and History, 1998), 3–7.

6. The first presbytery was located in Philadelphia in 1703.

7. Blethen and Wood, *From Ulster to Carolina*, 47.

8. *Ibid.*

9. The Philadelphia Wagon Road stretched from Harrisburg, PA, into the Carolina Piedmont through the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. The Piedmont is the geographical region between the sandhills and the Blue Ridge Mountains, encompassing about one-third of South Carolina's total area. Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 7.

10. George Howe, *History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina*, two volumes (Columbia, SC: Duffie & Chapman, 1870–83), 293, 417.

11. *Columbia Telescope*, Columbia, SC, August 1819.

12. The emphasis of this discussion is on York County, SC, and Mecklenburg County, NC.

13. Farnham, *The Education of the Southern Belle*, 192, n.11 refers to the classic study of this ideology in Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood," *American Quarterly* 18 (Winter 1966): 151–69.

14. "Circular of the Alexandria Boarding School, a male academy, 1844," available online: <http://www.alexandria.lib.va.us.m> (accessed August 2003).

15. Catherine Clinton, "Equally Their Due: The Education of the Planter Daughter in the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic*, 2 (April 1982): 48–52.

16. Peggy Allison's brother-in-law, Robert Latta, was one who petitioned to establish the school in 1818. Howe, *History of the Presbyterians*, 358. Later, Yorkville Female College was operated by Bethel Presbytery, 1853–61.

17. Palmer Grier Sherer, "A Partial History of Some of the Early Schools and Educational Movements of York County" (M.Ed Thesis, University of South Carolina, 1929), 44; conversation with Miss Margaret Gist, York, SC.
18. *Columbia Telescope*, Columbia, SC, 18 July 1820, 1.
19. *Pioneer and Yorkville Advertiser*, 20 September, 1823.
20. *Pioneer and Yorkville Advertiser*, 23 December 1823.
21. James Wakeman's father was from Balleston, NY, his mother, Sarah Redfield, from Middlesex, CT.
22. Theodore and Nancy Sizer, et. al. *To Ornament Their Minds: Sarah Pierce's Litchfield Academy 1702-1833*, (Litchfield, CT: Litchfield Historical Society, 1993), 130.
23. Betty Ring, *Girlhood Embroidery: American Samplers & Pictorial Needlework 1650-1850*, two volumes (New York: Knopf, 1993), vol. 2, 316.
24. Mary Hart's needlework map was referenced in an advertisement that appeared in the 12 December 1820 issue of the *Western Carolinian* (Salisbury, NC) for Steel Creek Female School. This school was held at Lower Steel Creek Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in York District, SC, near Ft. Mill, SC.
25. Dorcas J. Alexander (b. 1800) was the daughter of Nathaniel and Jane Wilson Alexander of Mecklenburg County, NC. Her first cousin, Sarah Jane Alexander, attended Salem in 1805. Nathaniel was the grandson of Hezekiah Alexander, founder of a noted Scotch-Irish Presbyterian family and signer of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence in 1776. Family research and documentation by Mecklenburg County genealogist Linda Blackwelder.
26. Elizabeth M. Spratt was recognized in the *Western Carolinian* of 12 December 1820 for her work in "Drawing and Painting on Paper and Silk" and "Needle-work."
27. The Free School Reports of South Carolina list academies that received monies from a district for teaching indigent children. While this does not account for academies that did not admit the indigent, it does provide a base number of existing schools by district beginning with the year 1811 through the 1870s. From 1840 to 1847, sixteen academies were listed in the Bethel Presbyterian Church community.
28. Howe, *History of the Presbyterian*, 417-418. Nancy was suspected of murdering her husband. She was subjected to the Presbyterian practice from Scotland whereby guilt was determined by the accused placing hands on the deceased person's head. If blood issued, the accused was declared guilty. Nancy passed the test on the exhumed body and was declared innocent.
29. Hart Family Papers, York County Historical Center (hereafter referred to as YCHC), York, SC.
30. Margaret H. Swain, *Historical Needlework: A Study of Influences in Scotland and Northern England* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), 79-80.
31. *Exhibition Samplers: 'Town and Country'* (Whitney, England: Whitney Antiques, 1997), 36.
32. The Mary C. Baldwin marking sampler from Mecklenburg County, NC, is in a private collection.
33. Malvinia, a very popular name for girls at this time, was a female heroine from early Scottish folk myths. She was memorialized on embroidery and, in 1826, an opera. Theodore and Nancy Sizer, et. al., *To Ornament Their Minds: Sarah Pierce's Litchfield Female Academy 1702-1833* (Litchfield, CT: Litchfield Historical Society, 1993), 88.
34. Hereafter, the generic "Salem" will refer to Salem Girls' Boarding School.
35. 4 June 1806 will of Doctor John Allison, Statement of Monies collected and paid out by William Smith, executor of Doc John Allison, Recorded on Book C pp. 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, York County, SC.
36. *Ibid.*, Book A, pp. 140-153.

37. *General Ledger and Students Accounts*, April 1805–May 1811, 195, Salem College Library, Winston-Salem, NC.

38. Frances Griffin, *Less Time for Meddling: A History of Salem Academy and College, 1772–1866* (Winston-Salem, NC: John E. Blair, 1979), 49, 107. In addition to her sampler, Peggy painted a watercolor of wild flowers, which she presented to the inspector of the academy, Abraham Steiner, in 1810 on the occasion of his birthday. Peggy's music book, dated 1809, contained within its pages two other flower patterns in watercolor. The handwritten, bound sheet music of vocal and instrumental selections included "Irish Airs" by Robert Burns, romantic Scottish ballads, sacred hymns, and military marches. Students at Salem were encouraged to memorize hymns and to learn pieces on the pianoforte.

39. John 4:1–42, NIV.

40. Hersh, *Samplers of Pennsylvania*, 27.

41. Another sampler from Mary Zeller's school was stitched by Elizabeth Stine from Bucks County, PA, completed at age nine; see Mary Jaene Edmonds, *Samplers and Samplermakers: An American Schoolgirl Art, 1700–1850* (New York: Rizzoli, 1991), fig. 13, 51; see also Ann Hey's sampler in Betty Ring, *Girlhood Embroidery*, vol. 2, fig. 382, 362.

42. Griffin, *Less Time for Meddling*, 46.

43. Elizabeth Torrence to James Torrence, letter, ~ July 1836, *Torrence-Banks Family Papers*, Rare Books and Manuscripts Division, J. Murrey Atkins Library, University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Elizabeth Torrence (1823–44) was the fourth daughter of James G. Torrence and his second wife Polly Latta Torrence. Mrs. Williamson was the wife of Rev. John Williamson of York County, SC, pastor/teacher of Hopewell Presbyterian Church and Hopewell Academy, 1821. She established the Hopewell Female Academy in 1831. Rev. Williamson's brother Samuel was a teacher at Bethel Academy in 1820 and married Jane C. Adams, a cousin to sampler maker Jane Meek Adams. Charles William Sommerville, *History of Hopewell Presbyterian Church* (Charlotte: The Observer Printing House, 1939), 37.

44. Griffin, *Less Time for Meddling*, 116.

45. In the 1830s, widower John Springs of York County sent his daughter Mary Laura Springs to Salem; and widower James Torrence of Mecklenburg County sent his daughter Camilla Torrence to Salem as well. The girls later attended Mrs. Sarazin's school in Philadelphia.

46. Griffin, *Less Time for Meddling*, 48–49. A study of the ledgers from the Salem Girls' Boarding School revealed that many Presbyterian girls purchased catechisms and hymn books.

47. While Peggy was away at school, her seventeen-year-old unmarried sister Eliza died. Her married sister, Jane Latta, lived seasonally in Philadelphia, seeking cures for her sickly disposition. Jane died and was buried in Philadelphia in June 1819, a month after Peggy's marriage.

48. Shortly after the death of her parents, Peggy's oldest sister, Jane Allison, married Robert Latta, son of Mecklenburg County, NC, planter and merchant James Latta. Robert Latta spent many years in Yorkville, SC, where his father traded and built a store; *State Gazette*, and *Columbia Advertiser*, Columbia, SC, 25 August 1818, 1. In 1813, Robert Latta purchased a lot in Yorkville and the adjoining lots from his father, Louise Pettus, "Latta's Will: Remarry; lose the home, land." *Charlotte Observer*, 12 December 2004, 7Y.

49. Henry Smith died September 28, 1820.

50. In 1839 Nancy Wesley Rowell of York County completed a sampler (not illustrated) as an adult that contained elements similar to this piece.

51. Peggy Allison Smith married John Springs on 2 May 1837. Unusual for the time, John wrote a prenuptial agreement to protect both of their estates.

52. The Springs, Lattas, Hutchisons and Torrences were merchants with partnerships and kinship ties in York County and Columbia, S.C. and Mecklenburg County, N.C.

53. All of her nieces and nephews died by 1865, thus essentially ending that Allison family line and further documented evidence of their lives.

54. Peggy Allison Smith Springs outlived her parents and all of her siblings.

55. Although census records do not specify names other than head of household, Peggy Allison was probably living in York County at the time she married Henry Smith. Even prior to 1819, as Jane Latta's unmarried sister, Peggy would be available as the supervisory aunt for her nieces and nephews and her own siblings. Questions as to whether Peggy accompanied her sister and husband to Philadelphia for seasonal residence, how much time she spent at the Lattas in Yorkville after her sister's death and Robert Latta's remarriage, and what her situation was in Columbia during her brief first marriage and her subsequent widowhood may never be answered.

56. Although her parents were prosperous, her circumstances changed with their death, her marriage, and her widowhood. Allison family estate records show that Robert Latta did inherit portions of the Allison estate after the death of Peggy's sister Jane, her only brother Albert's death in 1820 and the deaths of her siblings.

57. Additional samplers from the neighboring counties of Chester and Fairfield Counties South Carolina and Lincoln and Mecklenburg Counties in North Carolina have been located.

58. Her sampler is discussed first due to the similarities with the work of Peggy Allison. Chronologically, Frances S. Clinton's sampler is dated one year earlier, 1827.

59. Hart Family Papers, YCHC, York, SC.

60. "Memo of the Articles sold to Young Ladies in the Female Academy Yorkville, Sept. 30, 1822," York District Will Book A, 1800–1813, YCHC.

61. An anonymous framed silk picture c. 1820 entitled "Morning Mama" was backed with a newspaper ad for Yorkville Female Academy. The silk picture c. 1820, is a painting on silk without embroidery. It depicts a young child being embraced by the mother. There is neither signature nor provenance to identify its maker. MESDA Collections, Old Salem, Winston-Salem, NC.

62. The two surviving needlework examples by Presbyterian girls from York County have been documented: a sampler dated 1819 by Elizabeth Spratt and a sampler c. 1830 by Eliza Ann Williams. Embroideries identified with Yorkville Female Academy, 1820–1830, are distinctly different from each other.

63. Johan Sibmacher pattern book, 16th century.

64. German Band Sampler, 1738. Boston Museum of Fine Arts Collection. Independent scholar Kathy Lesieur identified the vase on the Allison and Adams samplers as a vase pattern of German origin used on this example from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the large vase of flowers directly above the peacocks.

65. See endnote 41.

66. Instead of using a template for a house pattern, she may have stitched her house or Yorkville Female Academy. Neither of these structures is extant in York County today, although the locations are known.

67. Margaret Allison is on the York County Tax Lists of 1827 showing she owned two slaves, but no property (real estate).

68. *Western Carolinian*, Salisbury, N.C., December 12, 1820.

69. The "Morning Mama" embroidery is held in the MESDA collection.

70. It is known that sponsors of academies contacted Salem for teachers. In 1840, James Torrence of Mecklenburg County, NC, wrote to Salem requesting a recommendation for a music teacher; Joshua Boner to James Torrence, letter, 23 July 1845. *Torrence-Banks Family Papers*, J. Murree Atkins Library, University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

71. Hersh, *Samplers of Pennsylvania*, 19.

72. D. G. Hart, ed., *The Dictionary of the Presbyterian & Reformed Tradition in America* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 225.

73. In 1842, sampler maker Jane Meek Adams was the wife of Alexander H. Barnett; they lived within a few miles of Bethel Church. In subsequent years, the Barnetts' (teacher J. P. D. Barnett) and Joel Barnett's property had academies. Most teachers listed were male members of Bethel Presbyterian Church, some being elders.

74. Rebecca Quinton, *Patterns of Childhood: Samplers from Glasgow Museums* (London: The Herbert Press, 2005), 32, 46.

75. Hersb, *Samplers of Pennsylvania*, 33–35.

76. Attached to the back of the sampler was information that documented the sampler makers' relationship to the owner, Mary Alice Sifford of Clover, SC. Jane M. Jackson was born in September of 1823, one of female triplets; she alone survived the first year. She married John Randolph Wallace on 23 May 1844 and died three years later on 21 May 1847. Mary Morrison Jackson was born 23 December 1813. She died 1 August 1854, having never married. The sampler passed down through the family to a great granddaughter.

77. Kathleen Staples and Margriet Hogue, *Samplers in the European Tradition: Mustertuch, Merklap, Sampler. Dechado* (Greenville, SC: Curious Works Press, 2000), 19 and Plates 12–14. Kimberly Smith Ivey, *In the Neatest Manner: The Making of the Virginia Sampler Tradition* (Austin, TX: Curious Works Press and Williamsburg, VA: CWF, 1997), 20.

78. Quinton, *Patterns of Childhood*, 32.

79. The expression "came across the waters" is still used in the Jackson family to refer to items that came with their ancestors across the Atlantic Ocean in the eighteenth century. To the present day the family retains many antique textiles woven and stitched from hand-spun wool and linen by their ancestors. The heirlooms include quilts, coverlets, garments, and samplers.

80. The Lucky family was related to the Hutchisons, Whites, and Springs of Ebenezer Presbyterian Church community of York County.

81. Elizabeth's first cousin, Isabella Lavinia Jackson, married Robert Ewart Adams, a brother of Jane Meek Adams; Hart Family Papers, YCHC, York, SC.

82. Elizabeth's birth is recorded in the family Bible as 22 June 1814; however, this date is at odds with the information Elizabeth herself provided on her sampler, which indicates that she was born in 1816.

83. Interview Patricia V. Veasey with Martha Jackson Curry, 2004, Clover, SC.

84. Nancy Hannah Stowe was born in North Carolina in 1827 to Larkin and Susan Spratt Neil Stowe.

85. Nancy Hannah Stowe's mother's sister was her namesake, Nancy Hannah Neil Watson. The Neils were members of Steele Creek Church in Mecklenburg County, NC. Nancy Hannah Neil Watson was the wife of Rev. Samuel Watson of Bethel. Rev. Watson served both at New Hope and Steele Creek during the time Nancy completed her sampler. Very likely the Neil and Watson families were a connection through which three important Carolina Piedmont Presbyterian congregations shared information on a regular basis.

86. *Yorkville Compiler*, 12 March 1841, published ads for Shady Grove Female School in Lincoln County, near Stowesville and the Eclectic Institute (female), Yorkville.

87. After Nancy's marriage to George Washington Mason of York County in 1847, the couple moved several miles east of Bethel Church to his home where her sampler remained in the family.

88. Jane Adams Jackson and Susan Elizabeth Jackson were first cousins to Elizabeth Davidson Jackson, Jane McEwen Jackson, and Mary Morrison Jackson, and sisters-in-law of Jane Meek Adams; Hart Family Papers, YCHC.

89. Jane and Susan were two of the eleven children of Elias Morrison and Mary Margaret Patterson Jackson. Jane was born on 20 February 1833 and married Robert T. Hyde Smith in February 1856. She, her husband, and daughter were founding members of a new church, Clover Pres-

byterian Church, organized out of Bethel Presbyterian Church in the 1890s. Susan was born on 14 March 1838. After the Civil War she married her first cousin, William T. Jackson, with whom she bore eight children before her death in 1908 at age seventy; Hart Family Papers, YCHC.

90. Juliana Caroline Vierling sampler, 1806, collection of Old Salem Museums & Gardens, Winston-Salem, NC.

91. Crawford, *Needlework Samplers*, No 4, 74–75. Maria McBurney used a three-leaflet vine pattern as a divider on her sampler completed in Antrim. The McBurney pattern origin is likely the German Clover Meander pattern; Furm, *Oder Model Buchlein*, Germany, 1524.

92. Swain, *Historical Needlework*, 3.

93. Hersh, *Samplers of Pennsylvania*, 106.

94. Crawford, *Needlework Samplers*, Plate 11, 51, 111.

95. Ivey, *In the Neatest Manner*, 74–75.

96. See Staples and Hogue, *Samplers in the European Tradition*, Plate 6, for an example of a Dutch sampler, dated 1703, that features an alphabet worked in double outlines.

97. Crawford, *Needlework Samplers*, 23, 88–91.

98. Her grandfather was a ruling elder at Bethel.

99. At about age thirty-five, Amanda married Robert Turner, a fifty-year-old widow with eight children. Amanda and Robert had four children of their own; Hart Family Papers, YCHC.

100. Farnham, *Education of the Southern Belle*, 2.

101. None of the Bethel samplers revealed the name of a teacher, school, or location that might be characteristic of embroideries of established female academies with northern teachers. A current study of nineteenth-century Mecklenburg County, NC, samplers by Presbyterian girls indicates a trend in inscriptions that have the makers' names, their instructors, and the places of instruction or birth. This research by Jane Estep and Pat Veasey may establish that those teachers were from the North.

102. The source for Susan E. Jackson's verse "How oft are we like Martha vex'd . . ." is the Biblical story of Mary and Martha from Luke 10:38–41. The verse itself was Verse 5 of a hymn "Mary and Martha" by N. Cowper and J. Newton, published in *Finsbury Chapel Collection of Hymns from the Best Authors: (with Ref)*, Part II, 171, by Scot Presbyterian Rev. Dr. Alexander Fletcher, London, 1835. The source for Jane M. Jackson's verse "Indulge the true ambition to excel, In that best art the art of living well" is the English poet Hannah More in "The Search After Happiness, A Pastoral Drama," *The Works of Hannah More, with a memoir and notes*, Vol. VI. (H. Fisher, R. Fisher and P. Jackson: London, 1834), 248.

Two Early-Nineteenth-Century Bedcovers with Salem, North Carolina, Connections

LAUREL HORTON

IN APRIL 2006, I EXAMINED a number of early bedcovers in the collection of Old Salem Museums & Gardens and the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (MESDA).¹ Two of these bedcovers are associated with women who had lived in Salem, North Carolina, during the 1810s. As I looked at the textile artifacts and read the accompanying information, I found myself wondering about possible connections—perhaps a social acquaintance between the two women, some suggestion of design or technical correspondence in the bedcovers, or the possibility that one or both of the pieces might actually have some association with Salem. Although I determined fairly quickly that the two women almost certainly never met, I decided to use the two remaining questions as a framing device in developing my interpretation of the two bedcovers in the context of the lives of their makers.

During the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, Americans had access to a wide variety of textiles to use on their beds. Based on surviving examples and research in early probate records, bedding textiles from that era included a wide range of items, both utilitarian and decorative, homemade and purchased, and imported and of local manufacture.² During the late-eighteenth century, a particular style of

bedcover emerged to attain a favored status: women throughout the newly formed United States created fancy bedcovers from lengths of plain white cotton cloth, embellished with white thread or yarn.³

Surviving examples of elaborate white bedcovers reflect a wide range of construction techniques, including weaving, quilting, stuffing and cording, and various embroidery styles. Regardless of technique, the white bedcovers share a number of common features. They are made of whole cloth; that is, lengths of fabric seamed together to create a single surface that is then worked in a design. Examples typically feature a framed-center design in which a large central motif is surrounded by a series of concentric borders. The designs most often feature botanical motifs; less often, human, animal, architectural, and other subjects, or geometric designs are incorporated.

A surprising number of white bedcovers survive from the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries; however, they have attracted comparatively little attention from researchers. Published surveys of historic needlework sometimes include examples of early white bedcovers, but no authoritative sources are available to guide curators and collectors toward a better understanding of examples found in public and private collections.⁴

The two bedcovers presented in this study are associated with Frances Graves (*Figure 1*) and Louisa von Schweinitz (*Figure 2*). The fact that the women spent part of their lives in Salem, North Carolina, is significant. The town was founded in 1765 as the seat of governance for the Wachovia settlement of the Moravians (more formally called the Unity of the Brethren).⁵ The Moravians were prodigious record keepers, both collectively and individually, and the surviving documents illuminate a wide range of transactions and events of everyday life. While evidence of the daily lives of ordinary early-nineteenth-century women is largely non-existent, I found fleeting references to both Frances Graves and Louisa von Schweinitz in surviving Moravian documents. I have compiled these brief, sometimes peripheral, details into an incomplete portrait of each woman. Though fragmentary, such profiles provide information that is rarely available for women of



FIGURE 1. Quilt by Frances Lewis Graves; Caswell County, NC; 1812–20. Cotton on muslin; HOA: 84", WOA: 84". *Old Salem Museums & Gardens Acc. 820.*



FIGURE 2. Quilt, unknown maker; possibly Germany; ca. 1810–1830. Cotton; HOA: 102", WOA: 87". *Old Salem Museums & Gardens Acc. 2794.*

the period. In combining biographical and circumstantial data on the two women with information gathered from an examination of their bedcovers, I have demonstrated how this method offers insights about the lives of early-nineteenth-century women in relation to their bedcovers, which are examples of an important but largely ignored group of embellished white, whole-cloth quilts and coverlets.

FRANCES GRAVES AND HER QUILT

Frances Lewis Graves attended the Salem Girls' Boarding School (*Figure 3*)—which operates today as Salem College—from 11 September 1810 until 2 September 1812.⁶ Frances Graves was born on 15 July 1797 in Caswell County, North Carolina, about sixty miles northeast of Salem. She was the daughter of Solomon and Frances Byrd Lewis Graves, but her mother had died by the time she arrived at Salem College, at the age of thirteen.⁷ Her father, Solomon Graves (1765–1830), was born in Caswell County to parents who had emigrated from Virginia. Frances's fourth-great-grandfather, Thomas Graves Jr., was reportedly born in the Jamestown Colony in 1613, and the Graves family had lived in Virginia for many generations.⁸ Like the majority of the fifty boarding students registered in 1810, Frances Graves was not a Moravian. In the early-nineteenth century, young women in the southern states had few educational opportunities, and genteel families from a wide area sent their daughters to Salem.⁹

The classes available at the Girls' School included "Grammar, Writing, Arithmetic, History, Geography, (German, if desired), Plain Needlework, &c." Instruction in music, drawing, and fine needlework was also available.¹⁰ Plain needlework included practical sewing, and students were encouraged to make their own cotton school dresses.¹¹ Frances Graves was one of the students who accepted the offer of instruction in fine needlework, at an additional charge of \$2.00 per quarter.¹²

Moravian needlework was highly regarded.¹³ The boarding school's first head mistress, Sister Sophia Dorothea Reichel, taught fine nee-



FIGURE 3. Salem Girls' Boarding School, Salem, NC; drawn by Gustavus Grunewald, lithograph by Peter S. Duval; Philadelphia, PA; 1840s. Ink on paper; HOA: 18½" (framed), WOA: 14½" (framed). *Collection of the Wachogna Historical Society, acc. P-323.*

dlework as well as academic subjects from 1802 until 1809. Sister Reichel was described as more skilled than any of the other instructors, particularly in embroidery, "having learned the art firsthand at the Bethlehem Seminary [in Pennsylvania], seat of the distinctive school of Moravian needlework."¹⁴ Records of the Salem school indicate that efforts were made "to teach some of the intricate forms of embroidery perfected in Bethlehem—tambour, ribbon work, crepe work, pictures worked in silk on satin."¹⁵ Sister Reichel married in 1809. Following her departure from the school, two young Salem women, Polly Steiner, age eighteen, and Friederica Vierling, age seventeen, were hired as teachers. Both Polly Steiner and Friederica Vierling had been edu-

FIGURE 4. Needlework picture attributed to Frances Lewis Graves; Salem, NC; 1810–12. Silk thread on silk.

Courtesy of Salem College, Winston-Salem, NC.



cated at the Girls' School; presumably they had learned needlework from Sister Reichel, as "extant examples of students' embroidery . . . testify to the Salem school's success in carrying on the tradition of fine Moravian needlework."¹⁶ Between 1810 and 1812 the teaching staff was described as "fairly solid, albeit young."¹⁷

As part of her instruction in fine needlework, Frances created an embroidered picture, using silk yarn on a ground of satin-woven silk fabric (*Figure 4*). The picture depicts a bucolic scene of a shepherdess holding a crook and a man playing a wind instrument.¹⁸ The couple stand under a tree in the foreground, while, beyond them, sheep inhabit a meadow beside a sturdy barn. The meadow is framed with craggy forms suggesting rocky hills and vegetation. The embroidery is skill-

fully done. The human figures are rendered in minute detail, down to the cut and drape of the clothing, the curling tendrils of the hair, and the delicate positioning of the man's fingers on the instrument.

The Salem Girls' School operated a dispensary from which students could obtain items for personal or classroom use.¹⁹ During her two-year stay, Frances Graves purchased a number of textile-related items, which were recorded in her school expense account.²⁰ The items purchased indicate that she practiced various forms of needlework that were popular during this period. On 11 June 1811, she purchased 112 skeins of embroidery silk, and it is possible that the purchase was related to her embroidered picture. Her purchases also include basic sewing supplies, such as a pair of scissors for \$0.27, needles, thread, tapes, and knitting needles.

Frances Graves also practiced tambour embroidery, a technique using a small hook to produce a chain-stitch design with silk, woolen, or cotton yarn. On 21 October 1812, she purchased a "Tambour needle & lace \$0.75," and on 25 December, "1 Box Tambour cotton."²¹ The term *tambour* (French for "drum") refers to the round, drum-like frame used to keep the fabric taut. According to one writer, the Moravians and the French were known to teach tambour work during the eighteenth and early-nineteenth century.²²

While Frances Graves was a student in Salem, the War of 1812 erupted. The war would later have an economic impact on the lives of the students as supplies, "especially such items as silk thread," became impossible to obtain; however, the school apparently continued to sell existing supplies at pre-war prices.²³ In April 1812, Frances paid \$0.10 per skein for embroidery silk, just one cent more than the previous year; and as late as 25 August 1812 she paid \$0.07 per yard for 191½ yards of chenille, a textured, silk yarn.²⁴

It seems unlikely that Frances worked on anything as large as a quilt during her stay in Salem. The few surviving records of southern female academies operating in the early-nineteenth century offer no evidence that quiltmaking was included as part of needlework instruction. The Girls' School was overcrowded during the two years

Frances studied there, offering little space to set up a quilt frame.²⁵ Needlework classes favored small projects, such as embroidered pictures, that could be worked in a class setting. Her cloth purchases during this period were recorded as five yards Gingham for \$2.92, one yard dowlas at \$0.62 per yard, two yards flannell at \$0.79 per yard, one yard Cambrick at \$0.82 per yard, and a quarter-yard of book muslin for \$0.22.²⁶ None of these fabrics would have been suitable for a quilt. More probably, Frances Graves made her quilt sometime after she left the school in 1812 and returned home to Caswell County.

Although Frances Graves may not have learned quilting while attending the Salem Girl's School, she no doubt made use of her instruction in plain and fine needlework. Frances constructed her quilt in two layers, a finely woven cotton on top and a coarser weave on the bottom, without a middle layer of carded cotton batting (*Figure 1*). The raised design was executed using a combination of stuffed and corded elements. For stuffed work, as in the petal of flowers, the maker typically basted a piece of loosely woven interlining beneath the section of the top to be worked. She stitched the contours of the decorative motifs through the two layers. She then inserted loose cotton, a little at a time, either between the threads of the interlining or through small incisions. For corded work, as in flower stems and outlines, Frances sewed paired rows of stitching. She then used a large needle, or bodkin, to thread cotton yarn through the channels between the rows of stitches.²⁷

The central motif is an airy bouquet set in an elaborate urn (*Figure 5*). A variety of blooms, buds, and leaves—both realistic and fanciful—grace the multiple stems of the bouquet. The delicate motifs and the pleasing asymmetrical arrangement may be a legacy to the Frances's training in embroidery. The central bouquet is surrounded by a discontinuous oval wreath featuring a repeated motif of smaller blooms and undulating leaves. Outside this wreath are five cornucopias—one in each corner and one centered below the urn—spilling sprays of flowers. All five of these motifs partake of a single design, rendered in mirror-image left and right, although the topmost



FIGURE 5. Central design detail from the quilt in Figure 1.

blooms crowning the two lower-corner sprays are absent in the other, more closely-spaced, iterations. Two gently-defined rectangular borders frame the central area: the innermost an undulating vine bearing clusters of grapes as well as fanciful blooms, and the outermost suggesting a loose cable of intertwining vines, blooms, and leaves. As with many similar pieces from this area, the large areas between the stuffed and corded designs remain unworked.

It seems likely that Frances Graves would have made her quilt sometime between leaving Salem Girls' School in 1812, at age fifteen, and her marriage when she was around twenty-two years old.²⁸ Some other white bedcovers surviving from this period are inscribed with the makers' names and dates of construction. Genealogical research typically reveals that the makers were in their teens or early twenties, and unmarried when they created the bedcovers. The elaborate white quilts and coverlets seem to have served as visual and material evidence of the makers' feminine accomplishments and readiness for marriage. After marriage, women generally turned their sewing skills to furnishing their homes and clothing their families.

LOUISA VON SCHWEINITZ'S QUILT

In November 1812, about two months after Frances Graves left the Girls' Boarding School, Louisa Amalia von Schweinitz arrived at Salem from Europe. Louisa (1791–1858) was born in Stettin, Germany (now part of Poland). Her husband, Ludwig David von Schweinitz (1780–1834) was born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and, in 1798, had accompanied his family to Herrnhut, the chief seat of the Moravians in Germany, where his father, a Moravian administrator, had been recalled to service. Young Ludwig completed his education at the Moravian Seminary at Niesky and was ordained to the ministry. He met Louisa, who was teaching at a girl's boarding school in Kleinwelke, and they married on 12 May 1812. Almost immediately, the couple set out for America, as Ludwig had accepted a call from the church to become the administrator of Wachovia, the Moravians' land tract in North Carolina.²⁹

Ludwig maintained a diary detailing the four-month ordeal of their journey. Travel in Europe was difficult during the years of the Napoleonic Wars. As the von Schweinitzes traveled by coach to the Baltic Sea port of Kiel, they were frequently delayed by local authorities and their numerous bags were opened and searched. Along the way, news reached them of the impending war between England and the United States. Departing on 2 July 1812, on the American ship *Minerva Smyth*, the von Schweinitzes were frequently delayed by violent storms, by harassment from English warships, and by threats from Danish and French privateers. Ludwig noted that Louisa had “a bad attack of seasickness, which returned with every storm.” Recalling the worst storm, Ludwig wrote “Our sensations in the first moments . . . were heart-rending, but immediately such a realization of the peace of God filled our souls, . . . and we agreed simply to commend ourselves to the Lord and await his gracious will for us.” On 8 September, the ship took advantage of a temporary absence of English cruisers and docked in New York. Eight days later, Ludwig and Louisa and their considerable baggage traveled by post-stage to Bethlehem, and from there to North Carolina. After a six-month journey, the young couple arrived in Salem on 14 November 1812.

Temporary housing was provided for the von Schweinitzes in two rooms on the second story of Salem’s Gemeinhaus, or congregational meeting house, in anticipation that a house would be built for them. However, upon their arrival Ludwig decided that given the economic disruption of the war it “would not be wise to build a new house.” Instead, he requested the use of an additional room in which he could “carry out his business undisturbed.” The Brothers responded by granting an adjoining small room, “which will no longer be an entrance to the Gemein Saal [hall for religious services], and the Brethren must use the other door.” Later, from 1819 to 1821, the von Schweinitzes lived in the Vierling House, “one of the finest private dwellings in Salem.”³⁰ Moravian society is structured by “choirs,” groups organized by gender, age, and marital status, and, upon arrival, Ludwig and Louisa joined the choir of Married People. By virtue of his position, Ludwig also became a member of the Aufseher Collegium, or

Board of Supervisors, and Louisa a member of the Aeltesten Conferenz, or Elders conference.³¹

In addition to his commitments to the Moravian Church, Ludwig von Schweinitz was a mycologist, a botanist specializing in the study of fungi. He devoted much of his time in Salem to exploring the surrounding countryside, collecting specimens of ferns, mosses, algae, and lichens. His pioneering efforts in this field earned him the title of the “Father of American Mycology.”³²

While Ludwig pursued his studies, Louisa carried out responsibilities at home and in the community. Peter Wolle, head teacher at Salem’s Boys’ School, recorded in his diary his enjoyment of frequent visits to the von Schweinitzes’ household, “where there never is any want of entertainment.” On 28 October 1814, Wolle wrote, “For supper I was invited to eat with Bro. and Sr. Schweinitz. . . . The food was just excellent—a turkey, two kinds of potatoes, cabbage salad, cucumbers, cranberries, tea, and bread and butter—and then also a wonderful pie and wine with it. It goes without saying that all of this was very interesting and agreeable. . . . I did not leave there until ½ to 10 o’clock.” At other times, Wolle noted that Ludwig had brought him a pie as “his wife had some baking done.”³³

On 21 February 1814, Louisa gave birth to a son, Edward Wilhelm. On 18 October 1815, Peter Wolle recorded in his journal that Edward von Schweinitz had become ill and died: “One must feel for his dear parents for their great loss. He was just at the age when he gave them the greatest joy, and begun to talk properly.” Two days later, Wolle attended Edward’s funeral, describing him as a “Very dear and cheerful child.”³⁴ The following year, on 26 October 1816, Wolle recorded that “Bro. and Sr. Schweinitz were presented with a little son. . . . Their joy is great.” The following day, Ludwig baptized his son Emil Adolph, described by Wolle as “a strange name.”³⁵ A third son, Robert William, was born 20 September 1819.³⁶

As did most of their neighbors, the von Schweinitzes employed household help for heavy cleaning and washing. On 19 April 1819, Ludwig reported to the Collegium that his present servant, Sister Sar-

ah Hege, was unable “to attend to her daily tasks in his household” and asked if he could rent an enslaved girl from a nearby plantation for service in his house. While no one objected to his request, “the Negro question” was a subject for debate in Salem during that time. The Collegium had adopted rules “restricting the employment of slaves in Salem, but their numbers increased nevertheless.”³⁷

In 1821 Ludwig von Schweinitz accepted a call to service in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. After making a farewell visit to each household, the family left Salem in November of that year. Ludwig and Louisa were accompanied by their two young sons and two adopted children, Anna Pannach and a small boy named Christian Ludwig Kluge.³⁸ Ludwig died in 1830, shortly before his fifty-fourth birthday. Louisa joined the Widows’ choir, and became the leader of that choir in 1844. On 28 October 1858, at the age of sixty-eight, Louisa “fell asleep in Jesus” in Bethlehem.³⁹

A close examination of the surviving facts of the life of Louisa von Schweinitz suggests several possible ways in which she acquired her quilt (*Figure 2*). Based on evidence that other white quilts of the period were the work of young women in anticipation of marriage, one might surmise that Louisa made hers as a young woman in Germany, but here the story becomes more complicated. Quilted bedcovers and clothing were part of the textile traditions in Great Britain, France, and the Netherlands during the eighteenth century, but there is no evidence of similar traditions in Germany.

One might wonder if Louisa’s quilt is part of a heretofore unknown German textile tradition, but her ancestry suggests a more likely influence. Louisa was the daughter of Jean Ledoux and Marie Malbrane Ledoux, whose ancestors were among the tens of thousands of Huguenots who fled France following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685.⁴⁰ Some Huguenots emigrated to England or America, while others, including Louisa’s ancestors, fled to Prussia. Isolated groups of Huguenots were generally unable to maintain their congregations following emigration. Most eventually assimilated with other Calvinist protestant denominations and by the late-eighteenth century their

descendents no longer spoke French.⁴¹ The Ledoux family successfully assimilated, as Louisa's father served on the town council of Stettin, their home village in Prussia, and Louisa was a member of the Moravian Church at the time of her marriage; in fact, a week after her marriage, she was accepted as an Acolyte.⁴²

Though no quilts are known to survive from this period in Germany, a well-established tradition of quilting flourished in the south of France as early as the twelfth century. Fifteenth-century records from the Mediterranean port of Marseilles reveal an active international trade in quilted yardage, as well as finished quilts and garments.⁴³ By the seventeenth century, such textiles were made in both cotton and silk, in a variety of colors, both plain and printed.⁴⁴ Although it is not clear from which part of France her ancestors emigrated, Louisa's white quilt might reflect her French heritage rather than either German or Moravian traditions.⁴⁵ The nature of her quilt may indicate that some Huguenot families retained more than just their surnames following emigration and assimilation.

Louisa's quilt consists of two layers of plain woven cotton sandwiching a layer of soft cotton batting throughout. The ornamentation is created solely by the contrast between the configuration of quilting stitches and the small unstitched spaces between. No stuffing or cording was introduced to enhance the three-dimensional effect.

The central design is a sunflower-like figure, a round floral medallion surrounded by thirty-two pointed rays arranged in two overlapping rows (*Figure 6*). Framing the center is an eight-lobed figure of linear swags and loops, providing a visual respite from the profusion of floral motifs beyond. Bouquets and urns of floral sprays fill all the available space, visually overlapping, leaving no unworked areas. Within this profusion, the four baskets marking the corners are identical and symmetrical, while the other designs vary in form and placement. A narrow, straight band separates the active surface of the body of the quilt from the more regular and comparatively placid border of feather plumes, triangles, and eight-petaled flowers in the corners. A row of scalloped half-circles forms a final frame just inside the outer edge.



FIGURE 6. Central design detail from the quilt in Figure 2.

The floral sprays, multi-petaled blooms, billowing plumes, and scalloped edgings in Louisa's quilt are similar to some of designs found on quilts made in France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁴⁶ While the profusion of overlapping designs seems to more closely resemble French needlework than English or American, there is not yet sufficient international comparative data on fiber, weave structure, design, or technique to determine the date and place of construction from an examination of the quilt itself.

A number of factors suggest that this quilt was not made in Salem. Once the couple had arrived in Salem, they had insufficient living

space to set up a quilt frame for the weeks or months the work required. There is no evidence that Moravian women in North Carolina made quilts, and Louisa was unlikely to have undertaken such a time-consuming, individual project as a new arrival in a community that valued communal activities. It seems more probable that the quilt was made before her emigration.

It is not even clear that this quilt was made by Louisa von Schweinitz herself. Information from her descendants described the quilt as having been “owned” by Louisa and “handed down through her son, Emil Adolphus.”⁴⁷ If Louisa made the quilt herself, she would most likely have done so in Germany prior to her marriage. Although similar quilts were made by young American-born women during this era, we have no evidence of similar traditions in Germany, or among Moravians with French Huguenot ancestry. Instead, the quilt may have been made or purchased by someone else and presented as a wedding gift. Whether Louisa made the quilt or received it as a gift, the quilt would have been among the couple’s belongings that survived their harrowing trans-Atlantic voyage. Or perhaps she acquired it during a return visit to Germany in 1817.⁴⁸

CONCLUSIONS

Frances Graves and Louisa von Schweinitz both spent parts of their lives in Salem, but their tenure there did not overlap. It seems fair to say that Frances Graves’s education at the Girls’ School had an influence on the artistry and skill shown later in her quilt. In contrast, what is known of Louisa von Schweinitz’s life in Salem seems not to relate to her quilt. She may or may not have made it herself, yet the fact that that she owned the quilt and later left it to her eldest surviving son suggests that it was a valued possession.

The two quilts likewise bear little resemblance. True, they are both white, embellished, whole-cloth, cotton bedcovers, constructed in a framed-center design, and featuring a variety of botanical motifs. But the design aesthetics, the techniques employed, and the resulting vi-

sual effects are dissimilar. Frances Graves stuffed and corded comparatively isolated motifs to create a raised design against an unworked ground, while Louisa von Schweinitz—or an unknown seamstress—worked the entire surface of her quilt with overlapping motifs delineated only by quilted outlines. Both techniques were among a variety of embellishment practices women applied to the creation of white bedcovers in the early-nineteenth century throughout the Eastern United States. All of these various textile techniques have antecedents in Western Europe, but, as yet, specific trajectories of transmission or influence remain undocumented.

The lives of women of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries are poorly documented. From this study, one observation becomes clear. The fragmentary sketches of these two women are possible because the women were associated with a Moravian community. For most women in the early-nineteenth century, census records and vital statistics are often the sole surviving documentation remaining of their existence.

Given the paucity of written evidence of the lives of early-American women, particularly in the South, the presence of a body of impressive, well-preserved bedcovers surviving from this period offers a significant, underutilized material resource. This study of circumstantial evidence relating to the lives of Frances Graves and Louisa von Schweinitz offers a small but significant step toward a better understanding of the activities, values, and expressive culture of women during a formative era of American history.

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NOTES

1. I am grateful to have received MESDA's Madelyn Moeller Research Fellowship in Southern Material Culture, which allowed me access to the museum's collections, research holdings, and assistance from staff members in April 2006.

2. For examples of early bedcovers, see Judith Reiter Weissman and Wendy Lavitt, *Labors of Love: America's Textiles and Needlework, 1650-1930* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987); Carleton L. Safford and Robert Bishop, *America's Quilts and Coverlets* (New York: Weathervane, 1974). For findings from probate records, see Sally Garoutte, "Early Colonial Quilts in a Bedding Context," in *Uncoverings 1980*, edited by Sally Garoutte (Mill Valley: American Quilt Study Group, 1981), 18-27; Gloria Seaman Allen, "Bedcoverings in Kent County, Maryland, 1710-1820," in *Quilting in America: Beyond the Myths*, edited by Laurel Horton (Nashville: Rutledge Hill, 1994), 54-69; Loretta B. Chase, "Quilts in Transition: A Study of Stafford County, New Hampshire, Probate Records," in *Uncoverings 2008*, edited by Laurel Horton (Lincoln, NE: American Quilt Study Group, 2008), 159-89.
3. Identification and analysis of the complex and interrelated factors that produced and fed this tradition is a goal of the author's larger study.
4. In 2006 I initiated a research project aimed at examining early white bedcovers, including research into the lives of their makers and on the larger context in which they emerged. This article represents a small part of the larger, long-term study.
5. For an overview of Moravian history, see Penelope Niven, *Old Salem. The Official Guidebook* (Winston-Salem: Old Salem, 2000), 8-19.
6. Salem College archival records, information provided by Dr. Rose Simon, Director, Salem College Library, 28 April 2006. The town of Salem is now the city of Winston-Salem. The two towns were merged in 1913.
7. FamilySearch.org ancestry files, available online: FamilySearch.org (accessed April-June 2006); Salem College archival records.
8. FamilySearch.org ancestry files.
9. Frances Griffin, *Less Time for Meddling: A History of Salem Academy and College, 1772-1866* (Winston-Salem: John Blair, 1979), 5, 116.
10. *Ibid.*, 40.
11. *Ibid.*, 103.
12. Salem College archival records.
13. Candace Wheeler, *The Development of Embroidery in America* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1921), 67.
14. Griffin, 46, 117-18, 103.
15. *Ibid.*, 103.
16. *Ibid.*, 104.
17. *Ibid.*, 118-19.
18. The instrument appears to be a generic representation of a shawm (an early form of oboe) or a chalumeau (an ancestral clarinet).
19. Griffin, 70-71.
20. Salem College archival records. Itemized accounts from 1806 to 1811 are not available, and the first item in the Frances Graves account is dated 11 June 1811.
21. Salem College archival records.
22. Virginia Churchill Bath, *Needlework in America: History, Designs, and Techniques* (New York: Viking, 1979), 309-11.
23. Griffin, 121.
24. Salem College archival records.
25. Griffin, 116.
26. In this context, "gingham" refers to a cotton cloth with woven stripes or checks; "dowlas" was probably a coarse cotton in imitation of an earlier linen fabric of the same name; "flannel" was a soft woolen cloth, usually white; "cambric" had originally referred to a fine white linen cloth, but by this time the term referred to a fine cotton cloth, which might be dyed, striped, or

printed; and the term "book muslin" was applied to the method in which fine printed cottons were folded and marketed. Florence Montgomery, *Textiles in America, 1650-1870* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984).

27. In some quilts, the stuffed motifs are actually created by inserting multiple strands of cotton cording instead of loose cotton. Unless the fabric of the stuffed motifs is damaged or worn, it is impossible to determine visually which technique has been used.

28. According to information provided by descendants when Old Salem acquired the quilt, Frances Graves "married Dr. William Graham, the president of Washington College, Lexington, Virginia (later known as Washington and Lee) (MRF 820). However, that William Graham (1745-99) died when Frances Graves was two years old (Online: <http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WM16F6N> [accessed 22 August 2008]). Other sources indicate that Frances Graves was married about 1819 to William P. Graham, of James City Parish, James City, Virginia (Family-Search.org). Further information about Frances Graves Graham is currently unavailable.

29. The following narrative has been compiled from the following sources: Moravian card file, MESDA Research Center; information provided by Lanie Graf, Moravian Archives, Bethlehem, PA: "Account of the Journey of Br. Ludwig von Schweinitz and his Wife from Herrnuth to Bethlehem in Pennsylvania from June 4 to Sept. 16, 1812," Adelaide L. Fries, *Records of Moravians*, vol. VII (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1947), 3021-43; Flora Ann L. Bynum, "Lewis David von Schweinitz: Father of American Mycology," *The Three Forks of Muddy Creek*, vol. II (1975): 42.

30. Moravian card file, MESDA Research Center, entries from BrD-F, H.C.f.G.-F, and EC-F; Niven, *Old Salem*, 76.

31. Moravian Archives, Winston-Salem, NC, website, online: <http://www.moravianarchives.org/history/salem.htm> (accessed 22 August 2008).

32. Bynum, "Lewis David von Schweinitz . . .," 41-50.

33. "The Diaries of Peter Wolle," trans. Dr. Peter S. Seadle and Dr. Irene P. Seadle, ed. Frances Griffin, in *The Three Forks of Muddy Creek*, Vol. 10 (1984): 80, 5, 7. It is likely that Louisa's pies were baked in the domed bake oven at the Winkler Bakery. Niven, *Old Salem*, 74.

34. "The Diaries of Peter Wolle," 40.

35. *Ibid.*, 88.

36. Emil became a bishop in the church and served as principal of Salem Academy from 1848 to 1853. Robert became a minister and served as principal of the Salem Academy from 1853 to 1866. Two more sons were born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania: Edmund Alexander in 1825 and Bernard Eugene in 1828. Edmund became a bishop, historian, and editor. Bernard became a minister but died at age 15 while visiting his brother Emil in Salem. Bynum, "Lewis David von Schweinitz . . .," 45.

37. Moravian card files, MESDA Research Center, Auf. Col.-EH; Bynum, *Records of the Moravians*, "Foreword," Vol. 7 (1809-22), ix-x.

38. Bynum, "Lewis David von Schweinitz . . .," 44; Moravian card files, MESDA Research Center, SD-F.

39. In 1975, Louisa's descendants donated her quilt to Old Salem. Old Salem Museums & Gardens Acquisition Records, acc. 2794, letter from Johnson family.

40. The Edict, enacted in 1598, marked the formal tolerance of the protestant sect. The revocation by Louis XIV removed this religious freedom, required that children be educated in the Catholic faith, and prohibited emigration.

41. Bernard Van Ruymbeke, "Introduction," *Memory and Identity: The Huguenots in France and the Atlantic Diaspora*, edited by Bernard Van Ruymbeke and Randy J. Sparks (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 8-10.

42. Information provided by Lanie Graf. An acolyte was a church member formally set apart

for lifetime service within the church though without ordination. C. Daniel Crews, *Moravian Meanings: A Glossary of Historical Terms of the Moravian Church, Southern Province* (Winston-Salem, NC: Moravian Archives, 1996).

43. Kathryn W. Berenson, "Origins and Traditions of Marseilles Needlework," in *Uncoverings 1995*, edited by Virginia Gunn (San Francisco: American Quilt Study Group, 1995), 9; Kathryn Berenson, *Quilts of Provence: The Art and Craft of French Quiltmaking* (New York: Henry Holt, 1996), 27-28.

44. Berenson, "Origins and Traditions," 12.

45. Provence itself was home to some 10,000 Huguenots in the seventeenth century; however, some 450,000 Huguenots lived in the five neighboring regions. Van Ruymbeke and Sparks, unpaginated map, "Huguenot Population and Synodal Provinces in Seventeenth-Century France."

46. See, for example, illustrations on the following pages: Berenson, *Quilts of Provence*, 17, 108; and Francine Nicolle, *Boutis des villes, Boutis des champs* (Aix-en-Provence: Edisud, 1999), 18, 21, 26, 62, 66, 91.

47. Old Salem Museums & Gardens Acquisition Records, acc. 2794.

48. In September 1817, Ludwig and Louisa left Salem to attend the General Synod in Herrnhut and "to look for professional workers in Germany belonging to trades which are poorly occupied here in Salem." Bynum, "Lewis David von Schweinitz . . ." 44; Moravian card file, MESDA Research Center, EC-S, SD-F.

